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# Saipan Tribune

THE CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

Volume XXII, Issue No. 61

TUESDAY MARCH 13, 2012

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## OPINION METER

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A U.S. Army sergeant opens fire on villagers as they slept, killing 16.

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An international push to end Syria's conflict stalls.

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Here's a rundown of the Top 10 busiest people on television.

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**Woman found dead in hotel room. PAGE 2**  
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# MPLT approves \$4.58M for CHC

By **MONETH G. DEPOSA** and **HAIDEE V. EUGENIO**  
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REPORTERS

Instead of waiting for the Legislature to pass a bill that will give the Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. an \$11.8 million line of credit, the Marianas Public Land Trust board decided yesterday to invest in the corporation, giving it a \$4.58 million line of credit.

That "investment" is in the form of a \$3 million revolving line of credit for CHC's operational and capital needs and a \$1.58 million loan for CHC's electronic health care initiative.

MPLT board chair Pedro R. Deleon Guerrero told *Saipan Tribune* yesterday that once a final agreement is signed be-

**See MPLT on Page 4**

## Trapped tourist rescued from small Grotto cave; 2 other tourists injured

By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**  
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REPORTER

Firefighters and Boating Safety officers rescued a female tourist who was

trapped in a small cave and stuck underneath a rock at the Grotto dive spot Friday morning.

It took two hours for the rescuers to free the victim, a 29-year-old Chinese, who sustained bruises, abrasions, and lacerations.

The victim's husband and another male friend, who also helped in the rescue, sustained similar injuries and were treated at the Commonwealth Health Center.

Police officer Jason Tarkong said yesterday that the three victims were dis-

**See TRAPPED on Page 4**

## Philippine consulate's last day is Oct. 31

By **CLARISSA V. DAVID**  
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REPORTER

The Philippine Consulate General on Saipan will be officially closing its doors on Oct. 31, a Wednesday.

Consul General Medardo G. Macaraig confirmed yesterday that he was notified about this decision during his recent trip to Manila, the Philippines.



Macaraig

Macaraig left on March 2 to meet with officials of the Department of Foreign Affairs and other heads of embassies and consular posts in the United States, coinciding with a meeting for foreign post heads in the Middle East. He flew back to Saipan last Friday.

"Oct. 31 is the last day that we will be

**See CONSULATE on Page 4**

## 'Fitial's claim of 9,000 illegals over-inflated'

By **HAIDEE V. EUGENIO**  
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REPORTER

Delegate Gregorio Kilili Sablan (Ind-MP) and former immigration director and now Rep. Tony Sablan (R-Saipan) separately said yesterday that the 9,000

illegal aliens in the CNMI that Gov. Benigno R. Fitial claimed is a number that they believe is "overly inflated."

Fitial reiterated his request to the federal government to give him the authority to deport illegal aliens and overstayers.

**See ILLEGALS on Page 4**



### A BOY AND HIS KITE

A young kite flyer peeks through his colorful kite at the Marianas Winds Kite Festival and Cultural Food Fair, held at the American Memorial Park ball field on Saturday. Hundreds flew their kites in various shapes and sizes at the fun event hosted by Brilliant Star School.

CLARISSA V. DAVID



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# Local

## Woman found dead inside hotel room

A 57-year-old Caucasian woman was found dead in her hotel room in Garapan Sunday afternoon.

A Commonwealth Health Center doctor pronounced the woman dead at 4:45pm, according to police officer Jason Tarkong yesterday.

Tarkong said there were no

signs of foul play but an autopsy has been requested to determine the cause of death.

"The case is under investigation and the identity of the dead person will be withheld pending notification of next of kin," Tarkong said.

Police investigation showed

that police officers responded to the hotel after receiving information about a dead person.

A housekeeping personnel found the victim lying on her bed as if sleeping. The personnel realized that the victim was dead so the hotel's security was notified.

Tarkong said the police investi-

gation showed that the victim had been staying at the hotel for several weeks and was last seen alive by hotel employees on Friday.

Tarkong said the victim left the sign "Do not disturb" on her door. The victim's room had not been cleaned since then. (*Ferdie de la Torre*)

## Fitial to Kilili: Give me \$700K and I will support SNAP

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO  
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REPORTER

Gov. Benigno R. Fitial said he would support the CNMI's inclusion in the national food stamp program if Delegate Gregorio Kilili Sablan (Ind-MP) can give him \$700,000 in matching funds for administrative costs.

Sablan responded yesterday that any matching fund is required from the CNMI government.

The delegate reiterated that while the CNMI government is expected to cough up \$500,000 to \$700,000, which is 50 per-

cent of the administrative costs, the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program or SNAP will mean an increase of \$12 million to \$24 million in food stamp benefits and multiplier effect in the local economy of some \$20 million.

"I will continue to work with the governor to try to convince him that SNAP is a good program," Sablan said.

Fitial, in an interview with reporters on Saturday, said the projected multiplier impact of SNAP is a "dreamland."

"Let's talk realistic, let's talk reality. Give me the matching and I will bring in SNAP," the

governor said.

At the same time, the governor said he asked the U.S. Food and Nutrition Service not to de-obligate \$4.5 million earmarked for the establishment of an electronic benefit transfer system in the CNMI because it will help combat what he calls food stamp abuse or "benefit trafficking."

According to the governor's definition, benefit trafficking happens when unemployed nonresident parents trade their U.S. citizen child's food stamp vouchers for cash or for products not allowed under the program's guidelines.

He said this underground economy is harming not just the program's integrity but also legitimate businesses and beneficiaries who follow the rules.

Fitial said by having an electronic benefit system, the incidences of benefit trafficking will be reduced, if not totally eliminated.

Unlike other states and territories, food stamps are still issued as physical voucher coupons in the CNMI.

Fitial said the meeting he had with Food and Nutrition Service in Washington, D.C. was requested by FNS officials.

## NMHC looks for next corporate director

By CLARISSA V. DAVID  
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REPORTER

The Northern Marianas Housing Corp. will soon issue a job vacancy announcement for a corporate director.

Board chair Marcie Tomokane said Friday that corporation staff is putting together the documents before making the announcement "probably and maybe in the next 30 days."

The corporate director position has been vacant since Joshua Sasamoto resigned on March 10.

Tomokane said they appointed mortgage and credit division manager Jesse Palacios as acting corporate director based on Sasamoto's recommendation. She said Sasamoto will be assisting Palacios during the transition process.

"I'm just happy that Josh has confidence in me that I could take over once he's gone," said Palacios. "He's done a lot of good things for this agency and whoever is the next corporate director just has to carry on the

"I didn't ask for that meeting. I was very happy that meeting took place. The message I gave them, there's a lot of illegal trafficking of food stamp in the CNMI because some, as you know, some people would come here pregnant, and they will deliver babies and the babies will be qualified for food stamps and then the parents will collect the food stamp and they will turn around and go to retailers and they will exchange the food stamp with cash and that is [not right]. We need enforcement that's why I asked them why you de-obligated that money when we need that money to buy automated system to provide for the enforcement," he said.

The response he got from FNS, he said, was that there's a memorandum of understanding the U.S. Department of Agriculture has to comply with.

"So I said 'good', now that you complied with the MOU, so we need that money to purchase the [EBT] system," he said.

USDA has not made a final decision whether to give back the \$4.5 million to the CNMI for the EBT because the funds have been earmarked for such a system for many years, yet the CNMI has yet to put it in place.

legacy, the good deeds, and all those other things that he's done here."

Palacios noted, though, that he has yet to see the official notice designating him as acting corporate director.

In his acting capacity, Palacios wants to ensure that the corporation is in compliance with all reporting requirements of the various programs they administer for the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

Palacios also said that he wants to see their next audited financial statements "in better shape" compared to previous years.

"We want to make sure that our audited financials are cleaner this time, with not much findings," he added.

Asked if he will apply for corporate director once the position is announced, Palacios replied, "It's an opportunity to move up and I'm considering it. Who knows? I might just turn in an application."

## Fund to withhold pensions of retirees without bank accounts

By MONETH G. DEPOSA  
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REPORTER

The NMI Retirement Fund is warning retirees who are still getting their pensions through paper checks that their benefits will be withheld next month if they fail to open a bank account where the agency can directly deposit their monies.

Fund legal counsel Carolyn Kern told the board at a recent meeting that affected beneficiaries have until April 1 to complete the process.

"If they don't convert to ACH [automated clearinghouse deposit], their April 15 checks will be on hold until they convert to ACH," said Kern.

Since the agency began requiring members to open an account for their benefits, only a handful have completed the process, according to Fund administrator Richard Villagomez. Since October last year, only 255 of 600 retirees who used to get paper checks have converted to ACH.

The Fund began requiring the issuance of pensions via direct bank deposits last year as part efforts to go paperless. The elimination of mailing more than 400 checks twice a month is projected to save the Fund about \$5,000 in stamps alone every year. Together with the savings from administrative costs, the Fund expects to save \$13,000 a year.

"This [conversion] is already ongoing and we reduced our paper checks [to date] because 255 of them had converted

to ACH so we are expecting more," said Villagomez.

Fund board chair Sixto Igisomar instructed the Fund management on Thursday to make a final announcement on the deadline to convert to ACH as well as other changes in the regulations.

Besides converting to ACH, the Fund will also reduce the interest on employee contributions—from the existing 3.5 percent to the bank's prevailing rate—and impose a new \$25 fee for retirees who habitually ask for changes in their information. All these policy changes will become effective by April 2012.

Under existing regulations, members are allowed to make changes in their beneficiary information once every year free of charge. However, Villagomez said that the Fund has been receiving a large number of habitual requests, including changes in addresses and other details on individual records, prompting them to come up with the \$25 fee. He said the objective is to reduce the unnecessary extra workload and administrative cost of the Fund.

Beginning April, the board will also stop the "emergency" issuance of checks after the agency reported mounting requests for the emergency release of pension checks, either for a funeral notice, airline tickets, and medical reasons. Under the existing rules, a pensioner could ask for an early release of checks five days prior to the issuance date. Pension checks are issued every 15th and 30th of each month.



A weekly update from the Marianas Visitors Authority  
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## Sora Tabi Festa in Sendai

On Feb. 15, 2012, the Marianas Visitors Authority participated in Sora Tabi Festa in Sendai, Japan, a travel information event that attracted approximately 300 women.



The event, held at Hotel Metropolitan Sendai, featured stage presentations and talk sessions by the MVA and four other national tourist offices in the Asia-Pacific region. In addition to delivering a PowerPoint presentation on attractions in Saipan, Tinian, and Rota, signature events of the Northern Marianas such as the Saipan Marathon and Taste of the Marianas International Food Festival & Beer Garden were promoted.

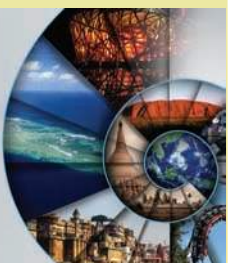


The MVA joined 16 other exhibitors at the event, including airlines and travel agencies, and distributed brochures and Saipan-da stickers.

Japan remains the top tourism market of the Northern Marianas, comprising half of all visitor arrivals last fiscal year.



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# PSS to use CW fees to reimburse CTE personnel, supplies

By **MONETH G. DEPOSA**  
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REPORTER

The State Board of Education has approved using the Public School System's share of the Commonwealth workers' fee collected by the government from U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Service to pay the salaries of career technological education teachers this school year and to subsidize materials for the program.

Based on the CNMI budget law for fiscal year 2013, the school system will get \$500,000 of the \$1.8 million in CW fees that will be collected from non-resident workers.

Documents requested from the BOE show that 20 employees are with the CTE programs: 18 classroom teachers, one in-

structor, and one coordinator. A budget summary of the program showed that the 20 positions will cost \$883,996, including benefits and insurance.

For the entire CTE program, the board adopted a budget of \$1.5 million, broken down into \$883,996 for personnel; \$495,204 for travel; and \$193,024 for equipment.

The per-school allocation for CTE programs is:

■ Chacha Oceanview Junior High School, \$51,897;

■ Hopwood Junior High School, \$103,137;

■ Rita Hocog Inos Junior High School, \$25,118;

■ Tinian Junior/Senior High School, \$21,703;

■ Kagman High School, \$137,017;

■ Rota High School, \$5,904;

and

■ Marianas High School, \$181,000.

At a recent meeting, board member Galvin Deleon Guerrero expressed concern about the system's ability to track the effectiveness of the CTE programs.

"The CW revenue is really intended to help transition the CNMI into federal labor force. I know we have standard-based assessments but I think we need to begin demonstrating how effective our program is in terms of actual job placement," he said.

Deleon Guerrero said that PSS and the board should also conduct other assessments such as actual workforce readiness, workforce effectiveness assessment, employer's satisfaction survey, and job retention, among others, to gauge the ef-

fectiveness of these vocational and technical programs.

The CNMI government is mandated to phase out its nonresident worker program by 2014 and phase in the federal employment system. CTE programs, according to board members, play a pivotal role in achieving this mission.

## Woman allegedly runs over husband with car

By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**  
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REPORTER

A 42-year-old man sustained serious injuries after his common-law wife allegedly chased and ran him over with a car Saturday morning in Garapan.

The victim was taken to the Commonwealth Health Center for observation. He sustained a fractured rib, lacerations in his ankle and heel, and multiple

abrasions and bruises in his torso and legs.

Police officer Jason Tarkong said that, according to a CHC doctor, the laceration in the victim's left ankle required 13 stitches, while the laceration on his left heel required three stitches.

The 34-year-old suspect was arrested for assault with a dangerous weapon, fleeing the scene of an accident, reckless driving, violation of a restraining order, and

disturbing the peace.

Tarkong said that police officers responded on Saturday at 6:14am to a reported hit-and-run at the corner of Adilanto Loop and Gobietno Drive in Upper Miha, Garapan.

Tarkong said the police investigation showed that the woman had chased her common-law husband aboard a car and ran him over with it. She then allegedly fled the scene.

Tarkong said that witnesses called the police and the woman was arrested 30 minutes later at a family residence in Lower Navy Hill.

Medics brought the victim to the hospital.

Tarkong said that prior to the incident, the couple had an argument, prompting the victim to grab his clothes and leave the house. As the victim was walking away, his wife chased him with the car and hit him with the vehicle.

## Fitial in Guam for executives' summit

Gov. Benigno R. Fitial, along with press secretary Angel Demapan, left yesterday for Guam to attend the 17th Micronesian Chief Executives Summit, which kicks off today. Pre-summit meetings were held yesterday.

Fitial's Guam trip came a week after returning from Washington, D.C. and California for a three-week meeting with federal agencies and fellow governors.

This year's theme for the three-day summit in Guam is "Oceans Unite Us." Nearly 100 officials and representatives from Micronesian islands are expected to be at the summit being held at the Sheraton Laguna Guam Resort. As of yesterday afternoon, however, the agenda was still being finalized by the host committee.

Guam Gov. Eddie Calvo said the leaders of Micronesia will be in Guam this week "with

one common goal—one united purpose: to set the course for a better Micronesia."

Teresa Kim, counsel for the lieutenant governor and acting press secretary, said the governor will attend both the summit and University of Guam Charter Day ceremony. The governor is expected return Friday morning.

The Micronesian Chief Executives Summit is composed of governors and chief executives of the CNMI, Guam, Palau, the Marshall Islands, and the Federated States of Micronesia's four state governors of Chuuk, Yap, Pohnpei, and Kosrae. Because the Micronesian islands are all communities that draw their economic livelihood, cultural values, spiritual well-being, and civic strength from their ocean-based environments, many common activities focus on environmental protection and sustainable development. *(Haidee V. Eugenio)*

# HOMECOURT

## - MARCH SPECIALS -

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\*This is an introductory course.



## CONSULATE

From Page 1

open to the public, barring any holidays,” Macaraig told *Saipan Tribune*.

Macaraig said the consular staff will be flying back to the Philippines after their last day. They have yet to be notified if they will be reassigned to another foreign post, he added.

The consul general said that they are already making arrangements on what to do with their furniture and fixtures and the rest of consulate as-

sets on island.

According to Macaraig, only two consular employees will remain after Oct. 31 to deal with any last-minute concerns and issues at the office.

Macaraig said he plans to meet with Filipino community leaders this week to inform them about what transpired at the Manila meeting.

He noted that Filipinos in the CNMI are in a better position than those in other parts of the world who have more need for embassies and consular posts.

“Let’s face it, the conditions here

are not the worst in the world,” said Macaraig. “There are Filipinos out there who are experiencing far worse than us here.”

At the meeting, Macaraig had the opportunity to get together with Guam Consul General Bayani Mangibin, who gave his word that he will look after the needs of the Filipino community in the Commonwealth. The Guam Consulate General will be taking over the responsibilities of the Saipan and Palau consular offices.

“I got a commitment from him that they will be here on Saipan at least

came in and smashed the couple against the rocks.

The victim got sucked into a small cave. The husband tried to reach the cave, but big waves kept smashing him up against the rocks.

The husband swam away and managed to get back on shore. As he was searching for her, he overheard her yelling for help. The husband saw his wife’s arm sticking out of a small hole inside the cave. She was yelling out his name and asking him to help her.

The husband grabbed her arm and asked members of their group to call for help.

A second man helped the husband hold on to the victim’s hand. The surge of waves, however, continued to smash up against the rocks, causing them to sustain bruises and lacerations.

twice a year and once a year on Tinian and Rota,” said Macaraig.

To demonstrate their commitment and to facilitate the transition, Mangibin will be sending his deputy to Saipan to be introduced to the Filipino community, said Macaraig.

He also said that the Guam Consulate General is already looking at maintaining a 670 or a CNMI-based phone number so Filipinos on Saipan, Tinian, and Rota will have access to their office.

When asked about the impact of the recently concluded signature campaign to retain the services of the Saipan Consulate General, Macaraig said it was not brought up at the meeting.

The United Filipino Organization, the umbrella organization of some 30 Filipino groups in the CNMI, spearheaded the petition drive to keep the consulate open, gathering a total of 4,808 signatures, copies of which were delivered to the Philippines’ Department of Foreign Affairs and other government offices.

UFO president Bong Malasarte said yesterday that their petition proposed the downsizing of the consulate by reducing their manpower and other expenses such as office rental. This, he said, would have allowed the consulate to continue with their operations despite a limited budget.

“What we are fighting for here is to retain the services of the consulate, even with a minimum staff. We’re not asking them to keep the entire staff,” he clarified.

Malasarte said that while DFA officials have already set the last day for the consulate, their group will still attempt to bring their petition and proposal to President Benigno Aquino III himself as a last resort.

“We cannot guarantee anything for the Filipino community at this point but we will still try to do something right to the end,” he said.

Macaraig pointed out that the twice-a-year commitment from the Guam Consulate general to Filipinos in the CNMI is “better than nothing.”

## TRAPPED

From Page 1

charged at 5:30pm Friday after a doctor determined that their injuries were not serious.

Tarkong said the Department of Public Safety dispatched Boating Safety officers to a reported possible drowning incident at the Grotto dive spot on Friday at 11:45am.

Upon arrival, the officers learned from tourists and bystanders that a tourist was stuck underneath a rock and was still alive. The victim was trapped in a small cave with her hand sticking out of a hole.

Tarkong said the entrance of the cave was some six feet into the water and hazardous surf conditions at the time made it unsafe for dive rescue units to enter the water.

Tarkong said Boating Safety officer Nobert Pua decided to break the rock and extract the victim through the hole.

DPS Fire’s Search and Rescue Unit members came and assisted the Boating Safety officers in the rescue. Both teams used ropes, a sledgehammer, and an axe to rescue the victim.

Tarkong said the rescue teams managed to carve out a hole about two feet in diameter to free the trapped tourist.

Preliminary police investigation showed that several Chinese tourists had arrived at the bottom of the Grotto around 11:30am to take pictures.

After taking pictures, the tourists walked up the stairs, but a large surge of waves came crashing in. One of the waves swept the victim into the water. The husband jumped into the water to save her but another wave

## MPLT

From Page 1

tween parties by Thursday, the corporation can draw down any amount from the credit line.

“We approved the direct line of credit to the corporation without going through requiring withholding interest. Both MPLT and CHC agreed to this amount and they can make a direct payment with some of their assets, which they offered as collateral,” Deleon Guerrero said.

Among the collaterals offered are the newly acquired Navy Hill property worth \$1.2 million and assignment of income from all sources, including accounts receivables, Medicare and Medicaid payments, and all general income sources for the period that the line of credit is in effect.

Deleon Guerrero disclosed that MPLT sat down with corporation officials on Friday to review its financial records and determined that the maximum amount permissible to invest in CHC is \$3 million.

“On this reduced amount, MPLT found out that they have the capability to pay. We looked at their books and reviewed their projected collections and we are convinced that they can meet [the repayment terms],” he said.

Once the corporation pays the \$1.58 million for the health electronic project within the year, it will automatically add up to the \$3 million initial credit line approved yesterday, bringing the revolving credit line to \$4.58 million, Deleon Guerrero said.

The electronic health record system project will allow the corporation to avail of over \$5 million in incentives and bonuses from the federal government. Deleon Guerrero said because the records project is federally funded, he is confident in the ability of the corporation to “reimburse” the

amount to MPLT.

He said the \$4.58 million line of credit is just the beginning; the corporation may get a higher credit line in the future as they continue to pay.

“If they [corporation] sign the collateral agreement by Thursday, and if the money becomes available by that day, then we will issue the check to the corporation. This is a challenge for them and they accepted the challenge. I hope the corporation will continue to become aggressive [in its collection efforts] and enforce good financial management and they can make it. We’re hopeful that the corporation can make it,” he added.

The corporation owes over \$2 million to various suppliers and vendors.

“MPLT expects a sound return on its investment, which also assists the corporation and its hardworking doctors, nurses, and staff during this most critical transition period,” Deleon Guerrero said. “The trustees remain committed to generating net interest income for the general fund while considering possible investments [that] also assist the community.”

### Sad

Rep. Ray Basa (Cov-Saipan), author of the controversial \$10.58 million line of credit bill that the Senate substituted, said it is sad that the House and Senate failed to agree on the bill to help CHC.

“Had the Senate passed the House version of the bill, we would have helped CHC weeks ago, and not wait for the governor to declare an emergency. We lawmakers could have helped take care of CHC’s financial problems,” Basa told *Saipan Tribune*.

When the Legislature failed to pass House Bill 17-278, CHC wanted to proceed with the loan agreement directly with MPLT without pledging security at this time due to the circumstances requiring an immediate infusion of

capital to address payroll shortages and vendor payments, among other critical financial issues. The hospital is currently under a state of emergency.

### Rejected

Only four MPLT trustees led by Deleon Guerrero signed yesterday’s MPLT resolution, after the Senate rejected on Wednesday night the re-appointment of Alvaro Santos as a member of the MPLT board.

Santos was recently hired as CHC’s chief financial and administrative officer.

The Senate, by a vote of 6-2, rejected Santos’ re-appointment over the MPLT decision, when he was chairman, to buy a private property for MPLT without approval of the majority of board members and therefore a breach of fiduciary duty.

Only Senate floor leader Pete Reyes (R-Saipan) and Sen. Luis Crisostimo (Ind-Saipan) voted “yes” to re-appoint Santos to serve a second term of six years on the MPLT board. Sen. Ralph Torres (R-Saipan) was absent.

Currently, the four MPLT trustees are Deleon Guerrero, chairman; vice chair Peter Q. Cruz; treasurer Melchor J. Mendiola; and trustee Gregoria Fitial-Omar.

Sen. Frank Cruz (R-Tinian), chair of the Senate Committee on Executive Appointments and Government Investigations that recommended the rejection of Santos’ re-appointment, said the panel is still reviewing Fitial-Omar’s re-appointment.

MPLT’s Deleon Guerrero said yesterday he hopes that Fitial-Omar will be confirmed by the Senate.

“We haven’t received a formal communication yet from the Senate that they rejected Mr. Santos’ reappointment. Mr. Santos has been a very active and productive member of the MPLT board. We will miss him tremendously,” Deleon Guerrero, a former House speaker, said.

## ILLEGALS

From Page 1

Florida-based human rights activist and former Rota teacher Wendy Doromal, in her blog, said “giving a corrupt and self-serving governor the power to regulate deportations is clearly an insane plan.”

“Why does the governor of the CNMI think that he can decide which nonresidents in the CNMI are legal or illegal?” Doromal asked.

Delegate Sablan said that Fitial’s figure is “inaccurate,” based on the delegate’s recent meetings with U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services officials.

“That’s highly inflated and highly irresponsible,” the delegate said in a phone interview.

Rep. Sablan, meanwhile, said he doesn’t believe the number of illegal aliens in the CNMI is that high.

“Even when the economy was still strong, the number of illegal aliens was not that high. Now the economy is so bad, I don’t think that many people would want to stay here when there is no more available work for them,” he said.

The representative said more than a decade ago, the government also thought there were several thousands of illegal foreigners in the CNMI but under a 1998-1999 amnesty program, only 3,000 to 3,500 illegal aliens came forward.

“The economy was still not as bad as it is now and we only had some 3,000 illegal aliens. Even with that number, there were many of them who had pending labor and immigration cases so they’re not really illegal. So I believe the governor’s number now of 9,000 is highly inflated,” he said.

Last year, Fitial said there were only some 3,000 illegal aliens in the CNMI, but this number, he said, has grown to over 9,000. He said they include those involved in the underground economy, are illegally employed, or jobless and therefore not paying taxes nor contributing to the economy or the community.

He also considers illegal or over-

stayers those who could not find an employer to petition them for a Commonwealth-only worker or CW status, and ended up applying for parole with U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services. USCIS has yet to decide on the application of many of these individuals.

Rep. Sablan said if people have applied for parole or for Commonwealth-only worker status, then that does not make them illegal. He pointed out that immigration is now a federal matter.

Doromal, for her part, said it is up to the DHS, USCIS, and the immigration courts to decide the status of foreigners.

She also questioned Fitial’s claim of being “very good” at deporting overstayers.

“He was very good at authorizing the CNMI Department of Labor to deport foreign workers who wanted to stay in the CNMI to pursue efforts made to collect thousands of dollars of back pay that their criminal-thief employers stole from them. I certainly would not call that ‘good’—maybe evil, unjust, deceitful, immoral, corrupt, but not ‘good,’” Doromal said.

Rene Reyes, founding president of the Marianas Advocates for Humanitarian Affairs Ltd., earlier said the fact that foreigners are applying for parole shows that they still want to contribute to the local economy. Most people granted parole could apply for authorization for employment so that they could legally work in the CNMI.

Doromal also took issue with the governor’s suggestion that everyone who is not contributing to the economy should “get out.”

“He thinks he can decide this? What about the disabled, the ill, the indigent? Is he speaking about only nonresidents or U.S. citizens as well? After all, many U.S. citizens in the CNMI are collecting food stamps and are not contributing taxes or to the economy. The CNMI is U.S. soil and federal laws apply. No governor can banish a person who is legally in the U.S. because he considers them to be ‘overstayers’ by his definition, which runs counter to U.S. law. How absurd,” Doromal said.



## Obama asks court to dismiss suit over federalization law

By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**  
ferdie\_deltorre@saipantribune.com  
REPORTER

U.S. President Barack Obama and some of his Cabinet members, through the U.S. Department of Justice, are asking the federal court to dismiss a local businessman's lawsuit that seeks to stop the implementation of the federalization law.

Obama and some Cabinet members, through DOJ's senior litigation counsel Theodore W. Atkinson, pointed out that under the doctrine of *res judicata*, Joaquin Q. Atalig cannot relitigate legal claims that the CNMI government already litigated and lost more than two years ago.

*Res judicata*, also known as claim preclusion, bars litiga-

tion in a subsequent action of any claims that were raised or could have been raised in the prior action.

To allow Atalig to do so would render the prior litigation meaningless, said Atkinson. It would also "open the door for any citizen to attempt a second bite at the apple when its government loses a legal challenge on its citizens' behalf."

Atalig, through counsel Joseph E. Horey, filed the lawsuit in November 2011 against Obama, Homeland Security Secretary Janet Napolitano, Interior Secretary Ken Salazar, State Secretary Hillary Clinton, U.S. Labor Secretary Hilda Solis, and U.S. Attorney General Eric Holder.

Atalig wants the U.S. District Court for the NMI to declare the Consolidated Natural Resources Act of 2008 (federalization law) as legally unenforceable and that its implementation and enforcement is valid and lawful only with the consent of the people of the CNMI.

Atalig is the owner of the Sunrise Hotel on Rota and some apartment buildings on Saipan.

Atkinson pointed out that Atalig's court action is the second lawsuit challenging the implementation and enforcement of the CNRA, which applied U.S. immigration law to the CNMI beginning November 2009.

The CNMI government brought the first lawsuit in the U.S. District Court for the

District of Columbia in 2008. The district court dismissed the suit on Nov. 25, 2009, and entered a final judgment in the case last year.

Atkinson said that when the CNMI sued the United States, it did so on behalf of the citizens of the CNMI, creating

privity between Atalig and the CNMI government. The claims in Atalig's lawsuit are identical to the claims brought by the CNMI government, he added.

Both actions, Atkinson said, implicate the same interests—the CNMI's exercise of local self-governance in the face of con-

gressional action to apply federal immigration laws to the CNMI.

Atkinson said a decision in Atalig's case contrary to the decision of the court in the CNMI government's lawsuit would "destroy or impair" the United States' interests in implementing the CNRA.

## Be wary of Internet lottery scams, says OAG

A CNMI resident recently contacted the Office of the Attorney General to discuss the \$800 he sent by wire transfer to a person who contacted him via email. He received an email that said he had won a lottery involving Facebook and/or Europe. The resident was the victim of a scam. The AGO forwarded the information to the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

The scammers told the victim he won second place in a lottery but to receive his winnings he had to pay taxes and processing fees upfront. He ended up

wiring about \$800 that he will likely never recover.

In these uncertain economic times, people often look at these scam solicitations as a miracle solution to their problems. They want to believe they will get easy money, and their problems will go away. Also, they are lured into a sense of security because the scammers claim associations with well-known companies such as Google, Facebook, Microsoft, MasterCard, etc.

To avoid being scammed:

■ If someone says you have won a contest that you had no

involvement in, you should immediately *suspect fraud*.

■ If a lottery or contest says you won, but requires you to pay a fee before getting your "winnings," you should immediately *suspect fraud*.

■ Remember that if something sounds too good to be true, it usually is.

If you have been a victim of this type of scam or any other cyber crime, you can report it to the Internet Crime Complaint Center at [www.IC3.gov](http://www.IC3.gov) or to the FBI or the Office of the Attorney General. (*Office of the Governor*)

## Tinian mayor wants deed to Tachogna beach

By **CLARISSA V. DAVID**  
clarissa\_david@saipantribune.com  
REPORTER

Tinian Mayor Ramon M. Dela Cruz wants the Department of Public Lands to transfer to the Tinian Municipality the deeds for the Tachogna Beach and other public lands bordering Sanhalom Bay.

In a letter dated March 6 to Public Lands Secretary Oscar M. Babauta, Dela Cruz said they have already started renovation work at the Tachogna Beach "in light of the great success we experienced with this year's Pika Festival."

Tachogna Beach is the venue of the Annual Tinian Hot Pepper Festival in February. This year marked the 8th celebration of Tinian's most popular festival, organized by the Marianas Visitors Authority and the Tinian Mayor's Office. DPL recently brought up with MVA managing director Perry Tenorio their "unauthorized use" of the Tachogna Beach for the festival.

Dela Cruz said Friday that they want the fee simple designation for Tachogna, Kammer, and Taga beaches "because we spend a lot of money on these areas and we would like to make sure that our money goes to the right place."

According to Dela Cruz, many of the picnic benches in Tachogna Beach have sunk into the sands and some of the roofs of the picnic pavilions have also come off.

He said the main pavilion is crumbling and its power source proved to be inadequate for the festival, while the building where the restrooms, showers, and changing rooms are located is in bad shape.

Dela Cruz said the renovation of Tachogna Beach and other areas on Tinian is part of the island's five-year economic development plan, which covers enhancement efforts in other tourist areas.

The mayor said he is awaiting quotations for these projects but noted that the Tinian delegation gave him \$1 million to fund the renovation of tourist sites and government facilities. The

amount comes from the interest of the local capital improvement project funds. Funding will also be augmented by casino revenues, he said.

Dela Cruz disclosed that the former Tinian mayor invested "quite a bit of money" in renovating some of the pavilions in beaches that do not yet belong to the municipality. When he came in he asked DPL to deed some of these properties to the

Tinian Municipality.

"It's only fair that since we invested so much money on that, that they will designate it back to the municipality," said Dela Cruz, adding that he is hopeful that the decision of Public Lands "will be good for the municipality."

Public Lands Secretary Babauta declined to comment, saying he will do so once he receives a copy of the letter.



**Procurement And Supply  
CNMI Government**



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**INVITATION TO BID**

**ITB NO.: ITB12-WIA-054**

Submission/Opening Date: March 29, 2012 • Time: 10:30 a.m.

**"OFFICE SPACE RENTAL FOR THE WORKFORCE INVESTMENT AGENCY – ROTA BRANCH"**

Copies of the specifications may be picked up at the Office of the Director, Division of Procurement and Supply, Lower Base Dr., Saipan, during regular working hours.

This is a federally funded project; as such, local preference is not available, because its use is prohibited by federal law granting funding for this project.

The Commonwealth reserves the right to reject any and all bids and proposals, in whole or in part, and to waive any imperfection in a bid in the best interest of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. All bids shall become the property of the CNMI government

/s/ **EDITH DELEON GUERRERO**  
WIA Executive Director

/s/ **HERMAN S. SABLAN**  
Director, P&S

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# Ross Hearing Aids



# Heinz's contract as board consultant temporarily halted

By **MONETH G. DEPOSA**  
moneth\_deposa@saipantribune.com  
REPORTER

The contract between the NMI Retirement Fund and former House speaker Heinz Hofschneider was temporarily halted after the board chairman's term expired Thursday last week.

Sixto K. Igisomar disclosed this to *Saipan Tribune* yesterday, saying the process will continue once he is confirmed once more to the position.

Igisomar's term as a Fund board member expired last week. Although Gov. Benigno R. Fitial re-appointed him to the post, he has yet to be confirmed by the Senate, along with board vice chair Adelina Roberto.

The board, which currently has three members, has been unable to meet since Friday due to the lack of quorum. The Fund board usually has seven members; it requires four members present to constitute a quorum.

The board decided in January to hire Hofschneider as a consultant to the tune of \$70,000 a year. The contract's execution has been delayed as both parties have been ironing out the contract's "deliverables"—the results and products expected of Hofschneider. Igisomar negotiated the contract and its deliverables at

the behest of the board.

*Saipan Tribune* learned that the contract signing was further delayed in February as both Hofschneider and Igisomar had to attend to some personal matters.

Yesterday, Igisomar said the contract processing will continue as expected upon his return to the board, though he could not immediately say when. He foresees no other reason to stop Hofschneider's contract, saying the former lawmaker is still willing to serve the Fund.

"[Hofschneider] is still very much willing to sign and serve



Hofschneider

as board consultant to help the Fund. As you know the process was stopped just because my term expired, but as soon as I get onboard we will continue the negotiation," said Igisomar.

Fitial earlier came out in support of the hiring of Hofschneider to help the troubled pension agency. Despite early opposition by Commonwealth Retirees Association director Diego Benavente, the organization has taken no formal position on the issue, according to CRA chair Larry Cabrera.

Igisomar said that there was no pressure from any faction or sector on getting Hofschneider aboard, even from the Executive Branch. He declined to fur-

ther comment on the issue because his term officially ended as a trustee last week.

In an earlier interview, Igisomar described Hofschneider as an asset to the Fund. He was selected at a time when the repealer bill for the controversial Beneficiaries' Derivative Act was signed into law, suspending procurement regulations

for 90 days. Hofschneider was selected a through sole-source contract.

Igisomar said that with the current situation of the pension program, the board has to find the best ways to salvage the situation.

The pension plan is projected to be depleted in less than three years if no new money comes in.

## Saipan gears up for Thursday's arrival of cruise liner

The Saipan Chamber of Commerce attended a pre-arrival meeting yesterday afternoon to address coordination for the arrival of the *Queen Mary 2* and her 4,000 passengers and crew this Thursday, March 15, 2012, around 4:45am. The *Queen Mary 2* has decided it will not dock as originally scheduled at Charlie Dock. She will anchor outside the channel and ferry passengers and crew in 100-man vessels into Smiling Cove every 15 minutes. There are eight vessels that will run continuously beginning at 5:45am and running until 4pm.

At the pre-arrival meeting, the Commonwealth Ports Authority, Department of Public Safety, Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Immigration, CNMI Customs, Saipan Stevedore, Marianas Visitors Authority, PMT, Chamber, Tasi Tours, etc. discussed the activities planned at the Smiling Cove Marina. Restricted areas and accommodations for passengers were discussed. Limited access and restricted areas were outlined.

At the Smiling Cove parking lot area buses will be staged. There are 10 buses for sightseeing tours, five buses have been

designated as shuttle buses to go back and forth from Smiling Cove and DFS Galleria. Next to the scales at Smiling Cove there will be artists selling handicrafts, souvenirs, local food, concessions, and shell leis. Cultural dancers are performing throughout the day.

It does not appear that taxis will be allowed in the bus areas. It was recommended to MVA and the Chamber that, as a result of heavy foot traffic passing through the American Memorial Park, taxis, and others wishing to transport passengers to restaurants, etc. will be allowed

at the parking lots next to the AMP amphitheater.

"Ranger Nancy Kelchner has no problem with Chamber members wishing to transport passengers to a restaurant, for instance, being given access to their parking lots for that purpose. Otherwise, DFS Galleria will be the drop off station for passengers and crew using the shuttle buses into the downtown Garapan area," the Chamber said in a statement.

Additional questions are to be directed to CPA and MVA on acceptable access to the passengers of *Queen Mary 2*. (SCC)

### COMMUNITY BRIEFS

#### OES PTSA meeting today

The PTSA officers of Oleai Elementary School would like to inform the parents and guardians of OES student that there will be a PTSA meeting on Tuesday, March 13, at 6pm in the school cafeteria. (PR)

#### UOG travel course to China, Tibet, Mongolia

University of Guam philosophy professor Kim Skoog announces a UOG Travel Course to China, Tibet, and Mongolia. Visit elegant palaces and remote monasteries, view artistic masterpieces and natural wonders, walk on top of the Great Wall of China, visit the Forbidden City, view the amazing terra cotta soldiers of X'ian, tour through the Potala and Summer Palaces of the Dalai Lama, and drive to the Mt. Everest Base Camp.

Participants will travel overland across Tibet (the highest roadway in the world) and then depart Tibet aboard the Qinghai Tibet Train, one of mankind's greatest technical wonders of the modern world. Students also will visit Genghis Khan's Mongolia, riding horseback across its grasslands, cheering horse races and wrestling matches, and sleeping in their traditional *ger* (yurt) dwellings.

Travel begins June 8 and ends June 29, for a total of 22 days of travel. Individuals can take this as a UOG summer school course (PI 486/G undergraduate or graduate) or just join us for summer fun and adventure. Complete cost estimate: \$3,000 +/- 10 percent plus tuition if taken for credit. Organization meetings are set for Wednesdays in March 14 and 28 at 3:30pm in the first floor conference in the Humanities and Social Sciences building room (Room 120). For more information, call Dr. Kim Skoog at 735-2800/2811 (socrates@guam.net). (PR)



#### ROMNEY VISIT

Matt Romney, the son of Republican presidential candidate Mitt Romney, joins Gov. Benigno R. Fitial and other officers and members of the Republican Party of the NMI Association for a group photo during a luncheon for Matt and his wife Laurie at the governor's private residence in Gualo Rai on Friday.

HAIDEE V. EUGENIO

## Saipan Marathon brings \$2M-plus international publicity

International media were strongly represented at the 7th Saipan Marathon on March 3, with over \$2 million in advertising exposure in Japan and Korea expected through the annual signature event of the Northern Mariana Islands.

Five television stations and two magazines from Japan, as well as two magazines from Korea, were on hand to cover the race. This year, the marathon attracted just shy of 800 runners for the marathon, half-marathon, 10K and newly added 50K ultra-marathon.

"The Saipan Marathon, along

with the upcoming XTERRA Saipan Championship on March 24 and the Tagaman Triathlon on March 31, are all promotional tools organized or supported by the Marianas Visitors Authority to spread the word about the Northern Marianas," said MVA marketing manager Bruce Bateman. "Not only do these events attract visitors, they also provide an opportunity to showcase our beautiful islands through visiting media, as well."

That opportunity is expected to translate this year to millions of television viewers and near-

ly 300,000 readers throughout Japan, as well as hundreds of thousands of readers in Korea.

Boom-Up filmed for a 30-minute program to air on Yomiuri TV and Chukyo TV, with special focus on CNMI Sports Tourism Ambassador and marathon supporter Kampei Hazama. Two female reporters of TV shows Hirujigedon produced by Nagasaki International Broadcasting and Niigata Ichiban! produced by TV Niigata Network were scheduled to run the marathon as part of their TV programs. Sapporo TV's What's New

Cute? will air a 50-minute program about Saipan, and TV Oita Broadcasting and BS Nippon Broadcasting will collaborate on another production introducing Saipan to their viewers.

On the print front, *Tarzan* magazine returned to the Northern Marianas to prepare a two-page article for their exercise- and stylish lifestyle-keen readers. *Sports Graphic Number*, covering sports news and athlete interviews, will also publish a two-page article on the marathon next month.

Participants in this year's

event hailed from Japan, Korea, China, the United States, Hong Kong, Guam, the Northern Marianas, and other countries.

This year's top finishers in the full marathon were, in the men's division, Shuai Yang of China (2:50:28). In the women's division of the full marathon, Mamiko Oshima-Berger of NMI led the pack (3:09:49), recapturing her championship titles from 2008 and 2009.

In the 50K ultra marathon, former Olympian Eric Wainaina Wahinya of Kenya finished first (3:32:19) in the men's division, with Yoko Yamazawa of Japan topping the women's division in 4:19:21.

Leading the half-marathon pack were Shohgo Tamura of Japan (1:27:55) in the men's division and Terra Allen of USA (1:50:45) in the women's division.

The winners of the 10K race were R. Charles Epperson of Guam (37:45) in the men's division and Noriko Jim of NMI (44:43) in the women's division.

"We give a big thank you to all our sponsors and the community for coming together to make this year's marathon a safe and enjoyable one for the participants," said MVA Community Projects manager Martin Duenas. "We look forward to another great event in 2013." (MVA)



# NMI's outstanding employers to be honored in banquet

In an effort to support local businesses that employ members of the National Guard and Reserve, the Guam-CNMI Committee for Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve will hold its 3rd Annual Employer Awards Banquet on Saturday, March 17, at 6pm, cocktails begin at 5pm, in the Royal Taga Ballroom of the Saipan World Resort.

This event, themed "We all Serve," is a celebration of employers in the CNMI.

ESGR is a Department of Defense agency, established in 1972, under the auspices of the Secretary of Defense for Reserve Affairs. The mission of ESGR is to gain and maintain active support from all public and private employers for the men and women of the National Guard and Reserve by advocating relevant initiatives, recognizing outstanding support, increasing awareness of the law, and resolving conflicts between employers and service members.

"This is our chance to say 'thank you' to the public and private businesses that support our local men and women in uniform,"

## MMAC team hosts #FREEDAVE Fridays

The 2012 Marianas March Against Cancer #FREEDAVE Team will be hosting #FREEDAVE Fridays every Friday beginning March 9 until the MMAC event on April 27 at Tha Trapp clothing shop on Middle Road in Gualo Rai.

To coincide with the first #FREEDAVE Friday event, the team will be officially launching their exclusive #FREEDAVE T-shirt with all proceeds raised going toward the Marianas March Against Cancer.

Members of the community will also get a chance to meet and greet David Ayuyu, the inspiration behind Team #FREEDAVE and will also have the opportunity to sign up for the #FREEDAVE newsletter to receive updates on team events.

said Foundation for Employers president Paul D. Leon Guerrero, whose organization is sponsoring this event. "When those moms and dads, brothers and sisters, sons and daughters get called to duty to serve our country, their mind needs to be on their mission—not worrying about losing their jobs while they're away."

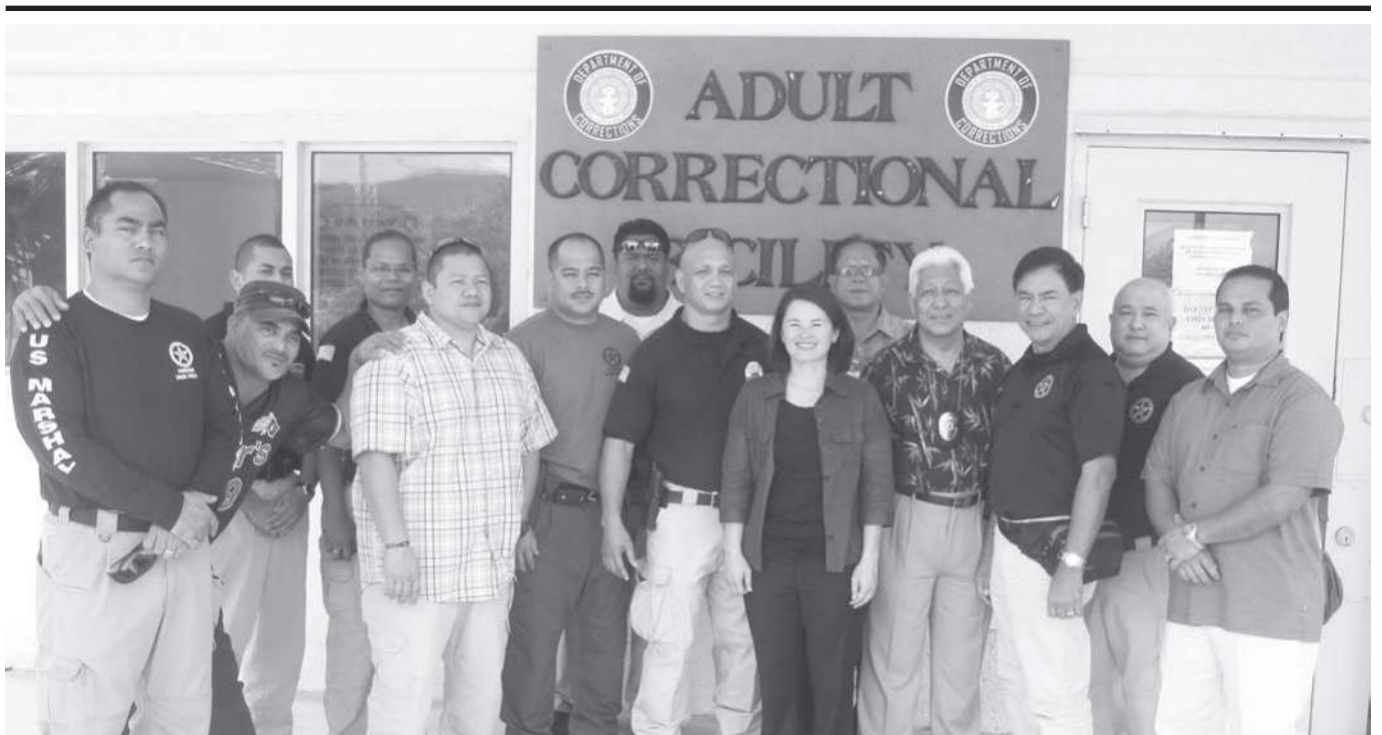
By law, employers must hold jobs for men and women who serve in the Guard and Reserve when they get called to duty. This allows service members to focus on the mission so they can safely return back home. The banquet will honor outstanding and supportive employers and their service member-employees.

"Our goal is to show those devoted employers a night of fun while maintaining active support from public and private sector employers," Leon Guerrero said. "They are true patriots and they also serve!"

About 100 attendees—employers, community leaders, and service members—are expected to attend this invitation-only banquet. (*ESGR*)

"We encourage everyone in our community to come out and support Team #FREEDAVE's efforts in raising badly needed funds for the fight against cancer. Along with the exclusive t-shirts, they will also be selling luminaries and raffle tickets so please stop by Tha Trapp and show your support. Call 234-8727 or email rob@salbahebrand.com for more information," said 2012 MMAC public relations committee chair Christopher A. Concepcion.

The Trapp is open 3 pm to 7pm Monday to Friday and 11am to 6pm on Saturdays and Sundays. To purchase your t-shirt online visit [www.salbahebrand.com/freedave](http://www.salbahebrand.com/freedave). You may also visit [www.facebook.com/freedave670](http://www.facebook.com/freedave670) for more information. (*MMAC*)



## OPERATION DEVIANT GUARD

Members of the CNMI, Guam, and federal agencies gather for a group photo outside the Department of Corrections after a press conference last week regarding the second Operation Deviant Guard, a four-day compliance check targeting 60 registered sex offenders.

FERDIE DE LA TORRE



## BIRTHDAY SHOUTOUT

Happy 1st birthday to our god-daughter Kimani Jaeri Cabrera Santos, who is celebrating her birthday today, March 13, 2012! We hope you enjoy your special day and your surprise will be coming. We love you so much and we can't wait to see you. With much love from Nino Craig and Nina Tinie. Greetings also come from Daddy, Grandma Zenaida, Grandpa Stanley, Auntie Chelle, Auntie Nish, Auntie Kika, Auntie Esper, Uncle Sus, Uncle Shawn, and Uncle SJ.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

## High seas closure non-negotiable, says PNA

**MAJURO, Marshall Islands**—With just two weeks until fishing nations and Pacific Islands meet at the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission meeting, the Parties to the Nauru Agreement said it will not bow to pressure to open the high seas to foreign fishing.

Each year the WCPFC brings together the Pacific Island countries, Asian nations, US, EU and other foreign fishers to meet and decide rules for fishing of tuna throughout the Western and Central Pacific Ocean, the world's largest tuna fishery, supplying 50% of the global tuna supply. This year the Commission must decide on a conservation and management measure for tuna at its annual meeting from 26-30 March at the Hyatt Regency in Guam.

Overfishing of bigeye tuna,

a popular sashimi fish, caught by longline fishing and as by-catch in purse seine fishing, is a problem in the region, despite healthy levels of other tunas such as skipjack tuna (commonly used for canned tuna).

Science indicates that the PNA's closure of high seas areas bordering their national waters had a significant effect in reducing bigeye tuna catch, in conjunction with other measures (such as controls on Fish Aggregating Devices or FADs).

PNA Director Dr Transform Agorau said: "In 2008, PNA decided to close high seas to foreign fishing vessels, a move that was a world first, leading the way in conservation. The WCPFC members also supported this high seas closure that year. While recently, some members have been talking

about reopening the high seas, this is a vital part of PNA's conservation and management of tuna. The PNA high seas closure is non-negotiable."

"Fishing nations should know that no matter what happens at the WCPFC, the high seas around PNA countries will remain closed. Rather than pressurizing us to reduce our conservation and management standards, the PNA is calling on the distant water fishing nations to increase *their* standards by taking voluntary conservation and management measures this year at WCPFC."

The PNA are eight countries that cooperate to manage tuna—Federated States of Micronesia, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Nauru, Palau, Tuvalu, Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands. (*PNA*)

## Commonwealth Utilities Corporation Job Vacancy Revised Re-Announcement

Job Vacancy No. 12-001

Opening Date: Tuesday, March 13, 2012  
Closing Date: Monday, March 26, 2012

### Financial Accounts Specialist

**DUTIES:** Under the overall supervision of the division manager or his/her designee, the incumbents duties and responsibilities are as follows: Responsible for performing paraprofessional financial related duties. May supervise lower level staff to include: prioritizing and assigning work; conducting performance evaluations; ensuring staff are trained; and, making hiring, termination, and disciplinary recommendations. Performs paraprofessional financial support activities to include: researches, collects, analyzes, and reconciles billing information from disputed accounts. Compiles documents to prepare billing adjustments and completes documents to support adjustments. Prepares written responses to customers of approved dispute resolutions. Initiates telephone contact and maintains proper follow up with customers. Tracks and reviews pending service orders for filed investigations. Assists in the preparation of variety of reports to and from internal departments that will assist in effectively resolving customer disputes in a timely manner. Establishes and maintains positive interactions with internal departments to resolve customer disputes timely. Assists in the preparation and reviews of required documents for Administrative Hearings. Performs other duties of a similar nature or level. SUBJECT TO PRE-EMPLOYMENT DRUG SCREENING.

**LOCATION:** Chief Financial Officer Division, SAIPAN.

**SALARY:** \$23,200.00 to \$25,296.00 per annum, un-classified, un-graded.

**POSITIONS:** Four (4)

**CONTRACT:** Not contracted.

**MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS:** Associate's Degree in Accounting or related field and three years of progressively responsible experience in the area assigned. Knowledge of: Supervisory principles; Administrative Procedures; Customer service principles and other applicable laws, rules, regulations; Basic mathematics; Telephone etiquette; Office policies and procedures. Skills in: Monitoring and evaluating staff; Prioritizing and assigning work to staff; Providing customer service; Applying Federal, State, and/or Local Laws, rules, and regulations; Performing mathematical calculations; Applying accounting/financial principles; Recording analyzing, verifying, reconciling, and reporting of transactions; Operating a 10-key machine; Preparing and analyzing reports; Using a computer and related software applications; Communication, interpersonal skills as applied to interaction with coworkers, supervisor, the general public, etc. sufficient to exchange or convey information and to receive work direction. APPLICANTS MAY BE TESTED.

Drop off your CUC Employment Application at the CUC Human Resource Office located on the 3rd Floor of the Joeten Dandan Building on Saipan. Otherwise, you may drop it off at the CUC Tinian or CUC Rota Administration Office.

## Commonwealth Utilities Corporation Job Vacancy Announcement

Job Vacancy No. 12-007

Opening Date: Tuesday, March 13, 2012  
Closing Date: Monday, March 19, 2012

### Laboratory Technician

**DUTIES:** Under the overall supervision of the division manager or his/her designee, the incumbents duties and responsibilities are as follows: Assists or collects field samples at various stations and checkpoints for water and wastewater operations. Assists or performs routine analysis on samples to ensure samples meet chemistry or microbiological parameters as determined by the EPA. Assists or Mixes media for chemistry titration analysis; calculates chemical reagent standardizations for chemical titration results. Cleans laboratory to include washing glassware and other laboratory materials. Assists in maintaining records of laboratory operations. Responds to customer or complaints from the general public. Performs other duties of a similar nature or level. SUBJECT TO PRE-EMPLOYMENT DRUG SCREENING.

**LOCATION:** Water Laboratory, SAIPAN.

**SALARY:** \$15,139.00 to \$23,465.00 per annum, un-classified, un-graded.

**POSITIONS:** One (1)

**CONTRACT:** Not contracted.

**MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS:** High school diploma, GED or ABE. Higher education and related work experience preferred. Knowledge of: Mathematics; Basic knowledge of chemicals; Safety procedures. Skills in: Collecting samples; Performing routine analysis; Preparing media; Following laboratory procedures; Using computers and related software applications; Communication, interpersonal skills as applied to interaction with coworkers, supervisor, the general public, etc. sufficient to exchange or convey information and to receive work direction. APPLICANTS MAY BE TESTED.

Drop off your CUC Employment Application at the CUC Human Resource Office located on the 3rd Floor of the Joeten Dandan Building on Saipan. Otherwise, you may drop it off at the CUC Tinian or CUC Rota Administration Office.

## Commonwealth Utilities Corporation Job Vacancy Announcement

Job Vacancy No. 12-008

Opening Date: Tuesday, March 13, 2012  
Closing Date: Monday, March 26, 2012

### Meter Technician

**DUTIES:** Under the overall supervision of the division manager or his/her designee, the incumbents duties and responsibilities are as follows: Installs or assists install customer meters to ensure billing of services received. Performs or assists in meter testing; replaces damaged meters with new meters. Performs or assists in disconnections and reconnections of services; disconnects tampered accounts. Performs verifications to ensure meters are functioning properly. Delivers delinquency notices to customers with no addresses. Performs other duties of a similar nature or level. SUBJECT TO PRE-EMPLOYMENT DRUG SCREENING.

**LOCATION:** Chief Financial Officer Division, SAIPAN.

**SALARY:** \$23,200.00 to \$27,262.00 per annum, un-classified, un-graded.

**POSITIONS:** Four (4)

**CONTRACT:** Not contracted.

**MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS:** High school diploma, GED or ABE and three years of work experience, preferably with meter reading or metering experience. Knowledge of: Meters; Customer service techniques; Basic mathematics. Skills in: Reading maps; Operating vehicles; Installing and replacing meters; Disconnecting and reconnecting meters; Identifying illegal connections; Communication, interpersonal skills as applied to interaction with coworkers, supervisor, the general public, etc. sufficient to exchange or convey information and to receive work direction. APPLICANTS MAY BE TESTED.

Drop off your CUC Employment Application at the CUC Human Resource Office located on the 3rd Floor of the Joeten Dandan Building on Saipan. Otherwise, you may drop it off at the CUC Tinian or CUC Rota Administration Office.



## A YEAR AFTER

## Japan on the road to recovery

» CNMI, Japan share 'resilience' amid crisis

By CLARISSA V. DAVID  
clarissa\_david@saipantribune.com  
REPORTER

Exactly a year passed yesterday since the magnitude 9.0 earthquake that hit the northeastern coast of Japan, killing nearly 16,000 people and causing billions of dollars in damage, yet the nation continues its recovery and rebuilding efforts in its quest to create a "new Japan."

In the CNMI, the Consular Office of Japan hosted on March 9 a one-year anniversary reception commemorating the Great East Japan Earthquake Disaster, spawning a devastating tsunami that inundated the Tohoku region and set off the meltdown at the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant.

Friday's event, held at the Fiesta Hall of the Hafadai Beach Hotel in Garapan, drew some 150 government officials, business leaders, and other community members.

Japan Consul Tsutomu Higuchi expressed his appreciation to the community and the rest of the world for their generous support and significant contributions in the aftermath of the March 11 disaster that left over 3,000 individuals still unaccounted for.

Higuchi said that the Commonwealth's "warmhearted sol-



CLARISSA V. DAVID

Japan Consul Tsutomu Higuchi, center, is flanked by Dr. John Joyner and Rep. Joe Palacios at the cocktail reception held at the Fiesta Hall of Hafa Adai Beach Hotel last Friday. The event commemorated the Great East Japan Earthquake which killed nearly 16,000 individuals after a 9.0 magnitude earthquake that triggered a tsunami devastated the northeastern region of Japan.

idity" with the Japanese was demonstrated through the donations that they and the American Red Cross-NMI Chapter received from the local government, business establishments, civic and religious organizations, and private individuals to help the relief efforts.

"Owing to such support from the international community, Japan is on the road to recovery and is once again looking to the future," said Higuchi. "We are working hard to progress along the road to recovery."

Higuchi said that in return for the overwhelming support, Japan will share with the global community the knowledge and lessons learned from the tragedy and will remain active in their

contributions such as the Official Development Assistance and coming up with ways to realize human security and sustain economic growth.

"Japan will 'turn the tables' or transform the challenges into opportunities concerning various issues such as post-disaster reconstruction and revitalization, disaster risk reduction, a shift to "green economy," the declining birthrate and aging society, high-level economic partnerships, and will offer the world a model as a 'lead runner in addressing these challenges,'" he added.

While much of Japan was severely crippled by the disaster, Higuchi assured that most of these areas have thus far "re-

turned to normal," saying that the country can be once again visited for business, tourism, study or other reasons "without undue worries."

Dr. John Joyner, senior policy adviser, was the Gov. Benigno R. Fitial's representative to the event. Fitial was unable to make it last Friday due to the visiting delegation of Republican presidential candidate's son Matt Romney.

In a year's span, Joyner said so much reconstruction has been done in Japan, which exhibits their determination and resilience in the face of disaster—something the CNMI natives have in common with the Japanese.

"We know disaster; we go down and we get up. These are lessons that we have in our genes," he added.

Marianas Visitors Authority managing director Perry Teno-rio said the Commonwealth is very proud to step up to the plate and do what it can to help Japan. "Our prayers are with the Japan community and the people of Japan. We hope that we can continually do our part to help in the rebuilding process," he said.

Attendees last Friday enjoyed refreshments while video presentations showing Japan's reconstruction endeavors were played at the event. Each received after the event a gift box bearing okiagari-koboshi or a folk art doll made of wooden mold with melted traditional Japanese paper and recycled paper, considered a good luck charm in the Aizu region in the Fukushima Prefecture.

## Flashback

## A LOOK BACK AT PAST YEARS' HEADLINES

Mar. 13, 1999

## Manglona gets Senate nod to CUC board

The Senate, holding its session on Rota last Friday, passed a slew of bills, including a measure seeking mandatory health insurance coverage for people with diabetes, and approved the appointment of a board member of the Commonwealth Utilities Corporation. Laura I. Manglona, recently named by the governor to the board representing Rota, got Senate confirmation for the second time in less than 10 months. She had resigned from her teaching job at Rota High School in exchange for her CUC appointment as the Constitution forbids government employees to be a member of the utility board.

## SGMA slams OIA anew

The Saipan Garment Manufacturers Association on Friday questioned recent statements made by Office of Insular Affairs official Richard W. Miller refuting SGMA's claims that revenues from the sector declined in 1999 from year ago. SGMA earlier projected that sales for 1999 will drop by 30-40 percent compared to 1998 figures. The association's projected loss is way higher than figures from the U.S. Department of Commerce which indicated that actual shipments into the mainland from Saipan dipped by no more than three percent. SGMA executive director Richard A. Pierce said he could not see a logical reason why Mr. Miller would refute the Saipan garment manufacturers' projected revenue losses, adding that the criticism was expected from an OIA official.

Mar. 13, 2001

## OPA wants salary hike for all govt employees

Ignoring what seems to be for the best interest of his office, Public Auditor Michael Sablan is favoring the implementation of a salary cap increase across all agencies of government. "Exempting the OPA from the salary cap would be unfair. I know it would benefit the OPA if the Senate allows the exemption, but I'm looking at the overall picture here," Mr. Sablan said. The Public Auditor said he agrees with positions held by the Office of Personnel Management and the Attorney General's Office which both opposed the exemption.

## Teno invites Norton to visit NMI

Gov. Pedro P. Tenorio has invited newly-installed Interior Affairs Secretary Gale Norton to visit the Northern Marianas to get a first hand evaluation of local issues that need to be addressed. In his recent visit to Washington DC, Mr. Tenorio paid Ms. Norton a courtesy call to brief her on the current status of the Commonwealth, as well as other concerns at hand. The governor said various issues that affect the CNMI were briefly discussed during the meeting with Ms. Norton who reiterated DOI's strong commitment in helping the Commonwealth achieve its economic and political goals. "The meeting turned out positively and she made a note on several occasions as I briefed her on current status of the CNMI," Mr. Tenorio told reporters in an interview yesterday.

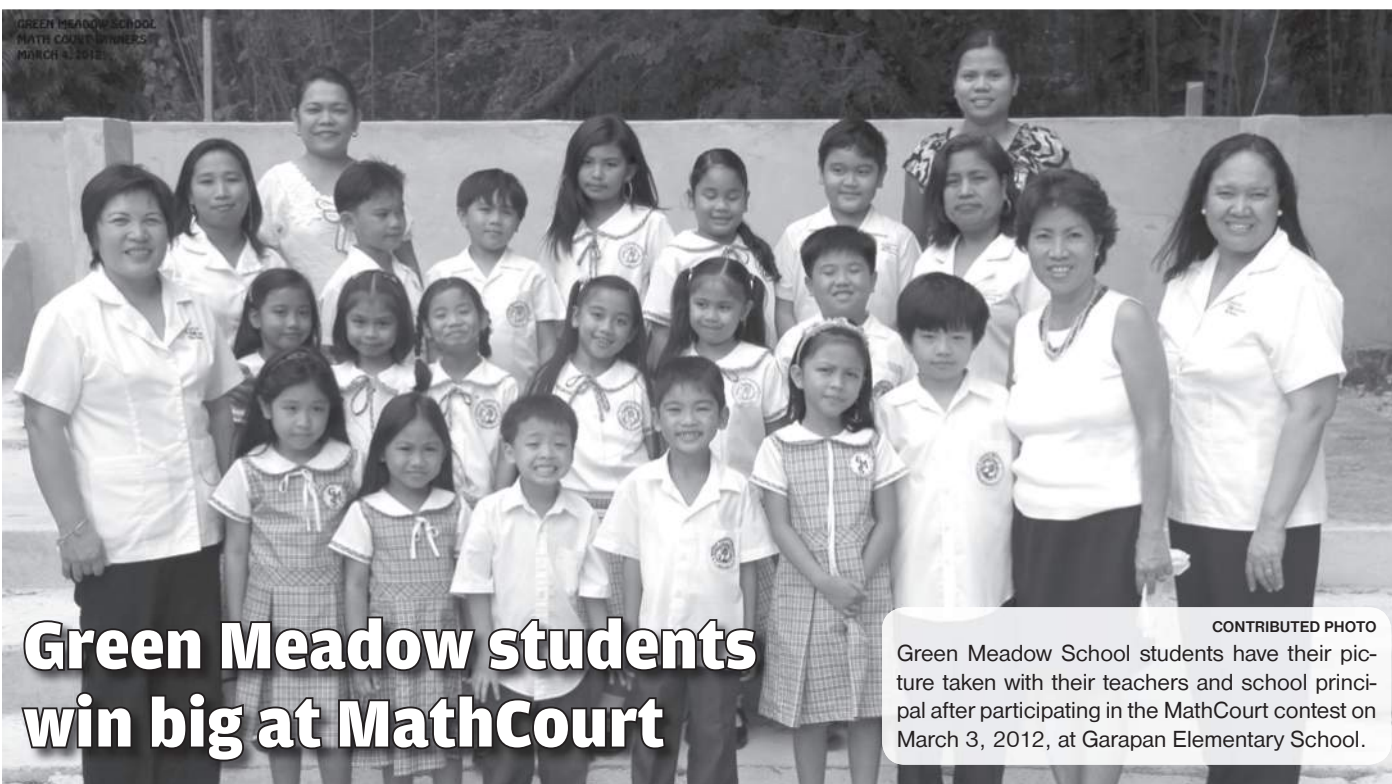
Mar. 13, 2002

## Ban on fuel stocks at beaches mulled

To protect tourists from the hazards of fuel, the Coastal Resources Management Office said it is thinking of revising its permit for jetski operations to prohibit the stockpiling of gasoline refills on beach concessions. CRMO acting administrator Joaquin Salas said he realized the need for the prohibition after joining enforcement teams in conducting inspections, where he noticed tourists lighting cigarettes at the beach, exposing them to a risk of a possible fire if fuel stocks are accidentally ignited. "That's a safety concern—the proximity of the cigarettes with the gas containers," Salas said. He then met with jetski operators and discussed the problem. At present, the conditions of the permit issued to jetski operators allow them to store containers of gasoline at least 25 feet from the shoreline, said Salas.

## A home for healthy children

The Children's Developmental Assistance Center opens its doors today to all parents and guardians of children—both healthy and suffering from developmental assistance—to raise public awareness of services and programs available on the island. Early Intervention teacher Robin Palacios and physical therapist Jocelyn Taitano said all CDAC staff, together with officials from the Department of Public Health and the Public School System, will be on hand to answer questions regarding developmental stages of kids from birth to three years old.



## Green Meadow students win big at MathCourt

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Green Meadow School students have their picture taken with their teachers and school principal after participating in the MathCourt contest on March 3, 2012, at Garapan Elementary School.

It was another great performance by competing students from Green Meadow School at the MathCourt contest held on March 3, 2012, at Garapan Elementary School. It was reported that some 900 students from both public and private schools belonging to K5 to 5<sup>th</sup> grade levels participated. Proud parents and the whole GMS family congratulate all the competing students for their outstanding accomplishment. School management commends all the

hardworking coaches, teachers, and support staff preparing the students for the event. Thanks to all the wonderful people who served as proctors in this particular Math Court competition.

## K-5 LEVEL:

1<sup>st</sup> Place, Nicole Sacramento  
2<sup>nd</sup> Place, Patrick Gregorio  
2<sup>nd</sup> Place, Lianna Daca  
2<sup>nd</sup> Place, Jeremiah Alfred  
3<sup>rd</sup> Place, Areeza Anda

## 1st GRADE:

1<sup>st</sup> Place, Kezia Arugay  
1<sup>st</sup> Place, Kyna Margareth Sales  
1<sup>st</sup> Place, Lyndon Digno  
2<sup>nd</sup> Place, Christian Ted Pamintuan  
2<sup>nd</sup> Place, Raphael Christian Galang  
2<sup>nd</sup> Place, Cloe Ferlyn Lagmay  
3<sup>rd</sup> Place, Leunyce Regalado

## 2nd GRADE:

3<sup>rd</sup> Place, Aljanah Joan Manabat

## 3rd GRADE:

3<sup>rd</sup> Place, Christian Dean Palattao

3<sup>rd</sup> Place, Kristina Jane Crisostomo

## 4th GRADE:

3<sup>rd</sup> Place, Ashley Reganit

## 5th GRADE:

2<sup>nd</sup> Place, Enming Cacdac

**Proctors:** Arthur Anda, Lea Coloma, Lizette Pascua and Shirley Galvan

**Coaches:** Ana Liza Quiambao, Sony Natividad, Melisa Umali and Ellen Alejo



# Golden Harvest students shine in competitions



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Golden Harvest International School Mark Daniel Ibanez, right, wins first place in the 4-8 Division Mathematics of the STEM Fair last Saturday at Saipan Southern High School. His coach is Jesson James V. Marfil while the assistant coach is Aida M. Lim. The school's STEM Coordinator is Flordeliza Flores.

Students of Golden Harvest International School, from kindergarten to 5<sup>th</sup> grade, brought pride to the school by winning awards in various local and regional competitions from February to the first week of March.

Primary Grades Forensic competitors displayed amazing showmanship on Feb. 18, 2012, at Koblerville Elementary School. MathCourt contestants showed off their knowledge in the field of arithmetic at Garapan Elementary School on March 3, 2012. Islandwide STEM Fair representative Mark Daniel Ibanez won first place in mathematics for the 4<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade division held at Saipan Southern High School. Matthew Leon Guerrero performed well as the school's representative to the Scripps Regional Spelling Bee Competition at the Sheraton Laguna Resort in Guam on March 3, 2012. (PR)



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

### MATH WHIZ

Golden Harvest International School students earn honors at the MathCourt competition held at the Garapan Elementary School on March 3, 2012. Gwen Tiffany Gamab won first place; John Isaac San Nicolas won second place; and Christine Joyce Caluya, third place. Their trainers are Aida Lim, Leonor Marfil, and Imelda Bautista.

Students of Golden Harvest International School brought honor to the school once more by winning several awards at the Primary Grades Forensic Competitors held on Feb. 18, 2012 at Koblerville Elementary School:

#### K-2 DIVISION

- |                       |                        |          |
|-----------------------|------------------------|----------|
| 1 <sup>st</sup> Place | Kyle Caraig            | - DUO B  |
| 1 <sup>st</sup> Place | Jude Litulumar         | - DUO B  |
| 1 <sup>st</sup> Place | Elisha Lacap           | - CSPK B |
| 1 <sup>st</sup> Place | Ivan Yuri Ferrera      | - CSPK B |
| 1 <sup>st</sup> Place | Katelyn Capati         | - CSPK B |
| 1 <sup>st</sup> Place | James Venus            | - CSPK B |
| 1 <sup>st</sup> Place | Mark Chavez            | - CSPK B |
| 2 <sup>nd</sup> Place | Christine Caluya       | - RF-MB  |
| 2 <sup>nd</sup> Place | Michelle Leon Guerrero | - DUO A  |
| 2 <sup>nd</sup> Place | Kyla Raquel            | - DUO A  |
| 2 <sup>nd</sup> Place | Hannah Lacap           | - CSPK A |
| 2 <sup>nd</sup> Place | Michelle Leon Guerrero | - CSPK A |
| 2 <sup>nd</sup> Place | Kyla Raquel            | - CSPK A |
| 2 <sup>nd</sup> Place | Sukey Wu               | - CSPK A |
| 3 <sup>rd</sup> Place | Elisha Lacap           | - DUO A  |
| 3 <sup>rd</sup> Place | Gwen Gamab             | - DUO A  |
| 4 <sup>th</sup> Place | Jude Litulumar         | - HI A   |
| 4 <sup>th</sup> Place | Christine Caluya       | - HI B   |
| 4 <sup>th</sup> Place | Amber Sureta           | - DUO A  |
| 4 <sup>th</sup> Place | Tyana Hix              | - DUO A  |
| 5 <sup>th</sup> Place | Sebastian Bernardo     | - HI B   |

#### 3-5 DIVISION

- |                       |                        |      |
|-----------------------|------------------------|------|
| 1 <sup>st</sup> Place | Mark Daniel Ibanez     | - DI |
| 2 <sup>nd</sup> Place | John Isaac San Nicolas | - DI |
| 3 <sup>rd</sup> Place | Marione Corpus         | - DI |



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Students of Golden Harvest International School have their photo taken after the Primary Grades Forensic Competition on Feb. 18, 2012 at Koblerville Elementary School.

- |   |                      |   |  |
|---|----------------------|---|--|
| 5 <sup>th</sup> Place                               | Ryan Divino          | - DUO   | Leonore Marfil, Marilyn Divino, and Aida Lim |
| 5 <sup>th</sup> Place                               | Mathew Leon Guerrero | - DUO   |  |
| <b>Coaches:</b> Lorelisa Espiritu, Imelda Bautista, |                      | <b>Judges:</b> Flor Flores, Elenita Duarte, Belinda Acosta, Kathy Florita |  |



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

### SPELLING BEE

Golden Harvest International student and Regional Spelling Bee representative Mathew Leon Guerrero, center, is flanked by coach Liz Espiritu, left, and chaperone Leonor Marfil at the Sheraton Laguna Resort, Guam.

## Eucon students win in MathCourt competition

Once again, Eucon International School students placed among the top winners during the MathCourt competition that was held last Saturday at Garapan Elementary School. There were more or less 900 students competing for mathematical excellence. Eucon students demonstrated their prowess in mathematical skills by ascending to the top position. Placing among the top are the following students:

#### FIRST GRADE

- Allia Pillarina, 1st Place  
William Xue, 2nd Place  
Clark Trasmano, 3rd Place

#### SECOND GRADE

- Joy Yan, 1st Place  
Pauline Santos, 1st Place  
Joanah Jimenez, 2nd Place  
Michelle Jeon, 3rd Place  
Naveen Lucenara, 3rd Place

#### THIRD GRADE

- Victoria Santos, 2nd Place  
Jin Seok Park, 4th Place  
Caleb Yan, 4th Place

#### FOURTH GRADE

- Matthew Millo, 3rd Place

#### FIFTH GRADE

- Philip Punzalan, 2nd Place  
Lenard Marcial, 2nd Place  
Danielle Pineda, 3rd Place  
Dante Balmores, 3rd Place

The Eucon administration would like to thank all faculty, coaches, and Eucon College students for their utmost dedication and commitment to mold the minds of future leaders in our community.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Eucon International School students have their picture taken after participating in the MathCourt competition on March 3, 2012, at Garapan Elementary School.



# Opinion

Hafa Adai!

## Saipan Tribune

THE CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER  
Volume XXII, Issue No. 61Published daily at 2/F JP Center,  
Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, CNMI  
Mailing Address: PMB 34, Box 10001, Saipan, MP, 96950Jayvee L. Vallejera EDITOR  
Mark Rabago ASSISTANT EDITOR

MEMBER

AP The Associated Press

Pacific Islands News Association

## EDITORIAL

### Time to arm Syria's rebels

The following editorial appeared in the Dallas Morning News on Friday, March 9:

**T**he West must no longer tolerate the wanton slaughter occurring in Syria under dictator Bashar Assad. His consistent targeting of noncombatants and Arab Spring protesters, with a death toll exceeding 7,500, burnishes the regime's well-established murderous record.

The Arab League and United Nations have tried but failed to negotiate a peaceful transition from dictatorship to representative governance. Russia and China stand in the way of forceful Security Council condemnation. Damascus apparently feels it has a green light to intensify the killing spree.

Anti-Assad forces have minimal chance of survival as long as the firepower remains overwhelmingly in the government's hands. It's time for the Obama administration to get behind international efforts to funnel arms and supplies to the rebels.

This is not a call for direct military intervention, as some U.S. politicians advocate. Syria occupies a far more complicated and sensitive patch of the Middle East than Libya, where a NATO-led air campaign helped tip the balance. The risks of direct U.S. intervention in Syria are unacceptably high. But there are other options than standing by and watching the slaughter.

Lest we forget: Damascus has provided safe harbor for murderous Palestinian radicals for decades. Syria provided a protective military umbrella during Hezbollah's 1980s kidnapping binge in Lebanon. Why not seize this opportunity to confront a regime that's been a constant irritant and threat to regional stability?

The record is replete with examples of massacres—the Balkans in the 1990s or Rwanda's 1994 genocide, for example—that could have been prevented had outside powers been bolder.

Just as in Libya, Tunisia and Egypt, the fall of a dictator always carries a risk of unknown elements gaining control. So far, however, none of the West's worst fears of a power grab by Islamist radicals have been borne out in those countries. Cautious, quiet Western diplomacy and aid have helped moderate extremist tendencies.

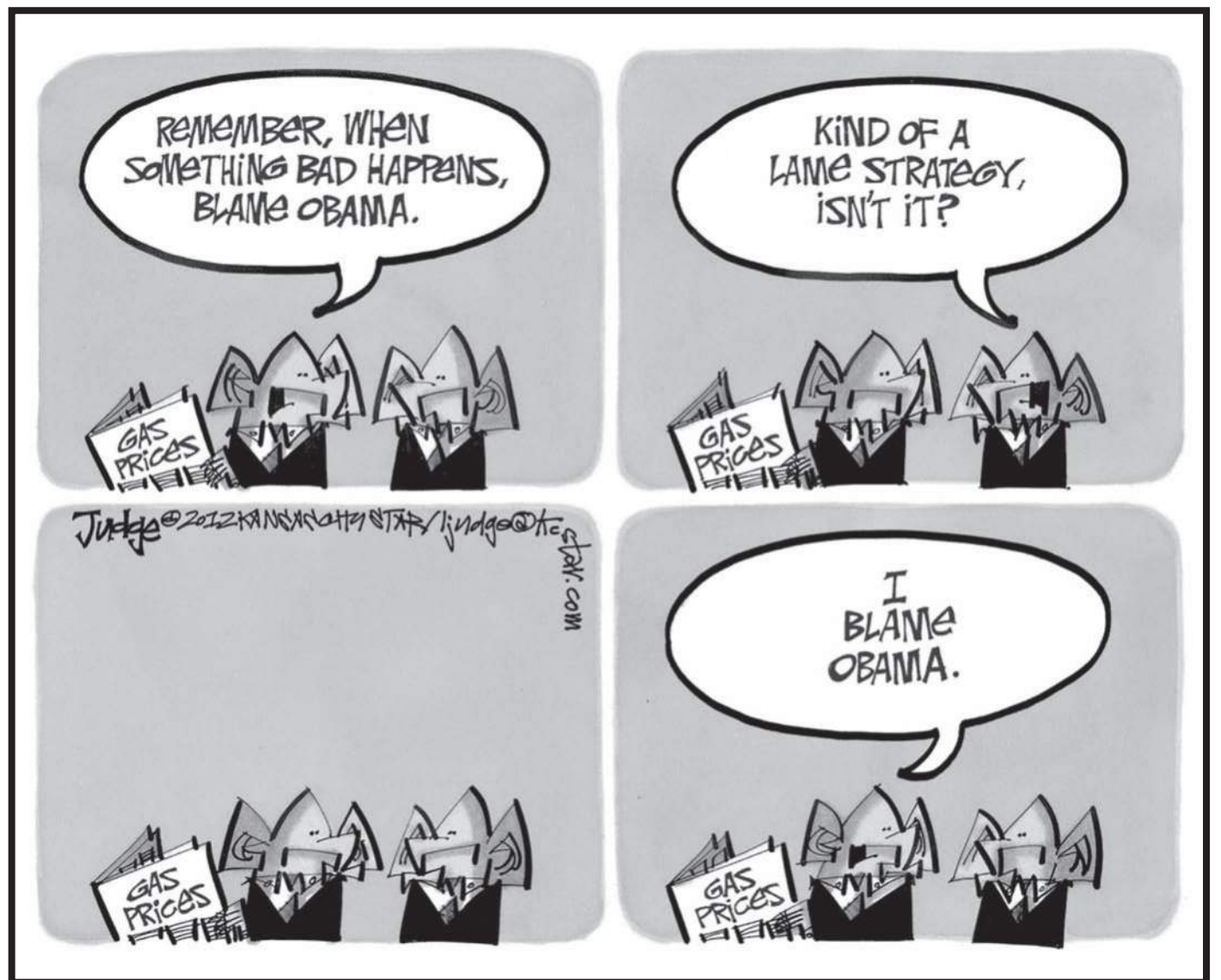
Another risk is that arming rebels could cause Syria's violence to explode into prolonged civil war. Those same dire predictions also failed to materialize in the other uprisings.

Syria's dictatorship could be at a tipping point. It is increasingly isolated, and recent reports suggest army defections are growing. A deputy oil minister announced his defection Thursday. China is withdrawing its expatriates. Syria's main benefactor, Iran, is handcuffed by stringent international economic sanctions.

Saudi Arabia and Qatar say humanitarian support is insufficient against what they describe as Syria's "killing machine." A key leader of the Palestinian group Hamas also is calling for the regime's ouster.

Syrians have demonstrated a willingness to fight this battle themselves if they can level the playing field. Weapons aid is the least risky way for Washington to avert massacres and give them a fighting chance.

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## Beware of the consequences of war

By URI DROMI  
THE MIAMI HERALD

**L**ast time I wrote here about the need to say less about Iran, and here I am today, talking about the same subject again. Well, do as I say, not as I ... never mind.

The recent meeting between President Obama and Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu exposed the gap between the two leaders on the hottest issue: Military action to stop Iran from becoming nuclear. While the two leaders fully agree that "all options are on the table," the differences evolve around the priority of the military action over alternative tracks, and on the question of timing.

Assuming that a military action against Iran will generate a fierce, maybe worldwide violent Iranian reaction, it is worthwhile to reflect for a moment on the human ability to forecast the outcomes and repercussions of war. For with all the good intentions, the meticulous planning, and the gallant efforts of soldiers to execute the plans, wars have sometimes produced results that were dramatically different from those expected before the breakout of hostilities.

A case in point is the First World War. While it was sparked by the assassination of the Austrian Prince Franz Ferdinand in Sarajevo, in June 1914, the motives that led to it were much deeper. The Austro-Hungarian emperor strove to put an end to Serbia's ongoing intransigence. The German kaiser encouraged him to do so, hoping to improve his position vis-a-vis Great Britain and establish Germany as the major power in Europe. The Russian tsar, humiliated by his country's impotence in previous crises in the Balkans, rushed to help his Serbian allies, hoping this time to succeed and to destabilize the Austro-Hungarian empire. France, followed by Great Britain, was sucked into the vortex to help allies, and so on.

By the way, once mobilization started, this was a one-way traffic to war. When in the summer of 1914 British Foreign Minister Sir Edward Grey tried to pre-empt the outbreak of the imminent war by initiating certain peace moves, the German kaiser asked his chief-of-staff, Gen. Helmut von Moltke Jr., to stop the mobilization. "Impossible," said the general, explaining that the strict transportation plan didn't allow it.

Military considerations, then, prevailed over the political judgment, and the rest is history.

Once Europe was turned to rubble and millions were buried, what happened to the hopes and the expectations of the main protagonists before the war? The mighty, centuries-old Austro-Hungarian empire collapsed like a house of cards. Germany, humiliated by the Treaty of Versailles, produced a Hitler who later brought much greater disasters. Russia fell to seven decades of communism, France was so weakened that it surrendered infamously in 1940, Great Britain lost a generation of fine men in the trenches, and so on and so forth.

I don't know if President Obama is interested in military history. Yet speaking to AIPAC, he gave the pro-Israeli lobby a glimpse of his thinking on the issue of war. This didn't happen last week, but rather four years ago, when he was running for president. He was reflecting on the war in Iraq in which, in his words, the "U.S. military has performed valiantly and brilliantly." Nevertheless, continued then-Sen. Obama, "A consequence of the (Bush) administration's failed strategy in Iraq has been to strengthen Iran's strategic position; reduce U.S. credibility and influence in the region; and place Israel and other nations friendly to the United States in greater peril. These are not the signs of a well-paved road."

Now read again the last sentences, and ask yourself seriously, even if you are not one of Obama's most vocal supporters, whether he wasn't right on each and every point of his analysis. Planning, calculating and hoping before the war is one thing; getting the desired results is another.

This doesn't mean that military action to stop Iran from becoming nuclear should be ruled out, whether by the United States or by Israel. However, every effort should be made to exhaust other means, before the bombers take off and the missiles are launched. For example, initiating stricter sanctions and strengthening international cooperation to impose them effectively. And if all efforts to stop a nuclear Iran fail, and a war becomes a must, then, quoting Obama, it should proceed on "a well-paved road."

Uri Dromi writes about Israeli affairs for The Miami Herald. Readers may send him email at [dromi@mishkenot.org.il](mailto:dromi@mishkenot.org.il).



EDITORIAL POLICY

Letters to the editor must include the name, address, and contact number of the contributor. Letters that are critical in nature should focus on issues, not personalities. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to [editor@saipantribune.com](mailto:editor@saipantribune.com); or through our website at [www.saipantribune.com](http://www.saipantribune.com).

# Will Afghan women’s rights be sacrificed for talks with Taliban?

By MINA HABIB  
THE INSTITUTE FOR WAR & PEACE REPORTING

**KABUL, Afghanistan**—Rights groups are becoming increasingly concerned that the Afghan government is willing to surrender women’s rights to advance peace negotiations with the Taliban.

The latest indication that women’s rights could be eroding came when the 150-member Council of Religious Scholars recently issued a “code of conduct” for women that, among other things, calls for segregation of the sexes in the workplace and in education and prohibits women from traveling unless accompanied by a close male relative.

President Hamid Karzai appeared to back the scholars’ recommendations, stressing their knowledge of religious matters and claiming that the code was not discriminatory.

Latifa Sultani, coordinator of the women’s rights section at the Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission, said the proposals, which include allowing men to beat their wives under certain circumstances, were troubling.

“We are concerned about the increasing growth of fundamentalist thought,” she said. “Women already face various restrictions on a daily basis.” The Council of Religious Scholars is backing government-led peace negotiations with insurgent groups, and some observers conclude that its new public stance on women’s rights is

part of a policy of appeasement.

“In view of the current political situation, I believe this declaration is of political rather than practical intent,” political analyst Mahmoud Saiqal said, arguing that the government wanted to “show the Taliban that their demand for Islamic precepts to be implemented is acceptable, and that they should trust it and continue with the negotiations.”

Wida Ahmad, head of the Afghanistan Social Adjudicators’ Association, also suspects the clerics of attempting to engage with the Taliban in pursuit of reconciliation. But she said their proposals would never become reality.

“Over the past 10 years, Afghan women have achieved political maturity and they aren’t going to accept this kind of pressure,” she said. “There are still some people in government who have Taliban-like ideas, and they are against all kinds of female participation in various areas of public life, but their efforts will be futile.”

Shahla Farid, a lecturer in law at Kabul University, noted that the ideas set out by the clerics ran counter to the Afghan constitution, which proclaims equal rights for men and women.

“Why doesn’t the Council of Religious Scholars issue declarations and regulations when Afghan women are sexually abused, forced into marriage, and have their civil and Islamic rights violated?” she said. “The council is always trying to harass women. It has never done anything to ensure the rights of women in society.” And some women wondered why the role of women in Afghan society

seems to occupy so much of the clerics’ time.

“Are the killings of innocent people, mutilations, violence, bribery, theft of state and private land, drug-smuggling and other crimes in accordance with the provisions of Quran,” asked Yalda, a Kabul resident. “If not, why doesn’t the Council of Religious Scholars issue a declaration on those issues? Why does it focus only on women?”

*Mina Habib is a reporter in Afghanistan who writes for The Institute for War & Peace Reporting, a nonprofit organization that trains journalists in areas of conflict.*

## Letter to the Editor

### Rome is burning and you go on a junket?

Paul Manglona, the Rota dude: You were called out on the CHC failure by the good doctors for good reason. And you cried and whined like a baby because of it, instead of showing real leadership and respect for the medical community.

You’ve been holding down a cushy government job as your career since way back in the ’90s. It’s time now for you to stop hiding behind the politics and power brokering that you consume with your time everyday and step up and prove your mojo *now*. If you even have any mojo left. Put yourself on the line as a fearless leader of the tribe, paid for by taxpayer dollars, trips abroad subsidized by foreign governments, federal grants, and God only knows what other creative funding schemes, and tell us what your No. 1 main idea is to increase revenue in Saipan, Inc., and what your No. 1 strategy is to rebrand the CNMI and reposition its failed marketing plan to relaunch the *only* sustainable and scalable industry and resource the CNMI has, and that’s tourism.

Let me highlight that, of the 40 bills that came into law in 2011, only one was for revenue generating! That’s a disgusting figure that you need to be called out on. And that one bill was that silly bribe payment to travel agents to bring more tourists here and a lame landing tax of \$15. When Rome is burning, your economy is in ruins, and the future land of your children is being destroyed economically and socially, the extent of your ability to create new revenue is only one lame ass bill to gather pennies from travel agents. You as a leader and elder statesman needs to be called out on this publicly. And fired if it was the private sector.

As a corporate leader in any company, and operating at the management and board level that is vested with the responsibilities of governance, fiscal leadership, and building stockholder value, as an elected official of Saipan Inc., you have that same job description. But you have failed in that job. The bottom line proof of that is the current state of your bankrupt entity business called the CNMI.

Now, let’s get specific. While all this mess with CHC and CUC was brewing up, you were getting a free trip to Taiwan last month. What the friggin’ heck will Taiwan *ever* do for the CNMI? Nothing in terms of dollar revenues in the short-term to help the suffering CNMI will ever come out of that weeklong resort trip you and five other Budweiser Barbecue Boys got awarded. And you deep in your heart know it. Don’t fool us.

Now here’s what infuriates me to no end as a company owner. You left your watch as key management at a critical time when CHC, CUC, and PSS situation was reaching a boiling point in the week prior. You bailed out for a useless trip. If any executive of mine showed such bad judgment as to not manage company priorities and take care of important business at hand, before engaging in blue sky future developments and fact finding junkets abroad for one week, I’d fire his sorry butt.

Now, here’s what’s even more disturbing. If you whine that you didn’t see the CHC and CUC power debacle coming to a head before Taiwan and not until you got back, then that’s even a bigger fault and failed judgment on your part. You’re paid and trusted to see and be suspicious of things when other people are not. You’re paid and trusted to see around corners other people can’t see around because you have access to market intel; they do not. That’s your job, Rota dude. You as a senior member of the political community failed to show leadership in this area, and took five other BBB’s with you. I bet all you Bud Boys all got fed real good over there. This is just an example of your lapse in leadership and vision. Prove your worth or get out now because Rome is burning.

Chris West  
Santa Monica, Calif.

ISLAND VIEWS

Editor’s Note: The following mini-essays are written by the students of the writing classes of Mrs. G. C. Borja-Robinson at the Northern Marianas College. The views expressed are solely those of the students.

PIFF

By IN JU AHN

Have you ever heard of “PIFF”? PIFF stands for Pusan International Film Festival. In my hometown of Pusan every September to October, we have the “Pusan International Film Festival” or “PIFF.” Pusan is called Busan today. When I lived in Busan, I enjoyed attending the “PIFF.” This fall will be the 15th PIFF. I attended the PIFF every year until 2010 when I moved to Saipan for my education. At the PIFF, I saw many films from different countries. Those international films featured movie stars from different countries. If you enjoy films, make sure to visit the PIFF in Busan, South Korea. During the festival, you can also attend special previews of upcoming movies. You can also watch special interviews with actors, actresses, and producers of forthcoming international movies. Those interviews provide a good opportunity to see famous international movie stars up close. When I lived in Korea, my sister and I went every weekend to the movie theater to watch a brand new movie. Watching international movies helped me reduce fatigue and stress. For me, movies are as indispensable as air. If you love movies, you will want to visit the PIFF—the Pusan International Film Festival—in Busan, South Korea.

Family picnics

By PISANTY NACHU

I come from a big family, so we often have picnics on weekends to bring everyone together for peace, unity, and love. Last weekend, my family and I spent an unusual weekend at the beach. It was raining hard. The other male adults and I tried to get a fire going for a barbecue. After several attempts, we finally got the fire started. However, we had to use an umbrella to keep the fire going. Now picture this: A bunch of adult guys all huddled around the barbecue grill with big umbrellas to keep ourselves and the barbecue fire dry. While we waited for the meat to grill, my cousins went to the store to get cold treats—sodas, ice cream, and the like. Never mind that it was raining hard and we were cold and wet! We also wanted to eat and drink cold treats. If you meet my family for the first time, you will see that we are somewhat unusual. However, you will also immediately see the peace, unity, and unconditional love among everyone in the family.

Grotto

By JESSICA R. FLORES

Have you recently visited the Grotto in Marpi? The Grotto is a favorite place to visit for residents and tourists alike. With the cold breezes and rushing waters, the Grotto is a place to swim with family and friends. However, only swimmers should experience the waters

of the Grotto. Non-swimmers definitely should not swim there, because the Grotto has underwater currents. Swimmers will also find the Grotto waters exciting to snorkel in. They will see the awesome beauty of the ocean waters. Divers will also enjoy the Grotto. Even though the stairs are long to reach it, the Grotto is a worthwhile place to visit. Two weekends ago a friend of mine almost drowned while swimming in the Grotto. Fortunately, there were other swimmers who helped us rescue her. So visit the Grotto. Just remember to take great care and caution when you swim!

My wheels

By HEIRSZAN JAMES MARTINEZ

Do you have a pickup truck? I have a 1992 Nissan hard body pickup that I love, second to my girlfriend. I have a passion for low-rider pickup trucks. Ever since I was a little kid, I worked on the engine of my Nissan pickup with my father. He taught me how to disassemble the engine for port and polish. The best part about taking an engine apart is putting it back together. It is so exciting to hear it start when you test drive it. Those early experiences got me into drag racing. My mom thinks it is dangerous for me to drag race my pickup but I still do it anyway. My favorite spot to drag race is in Marpi. My dad passed away last year, so now I work on my truck by myself. I find working on the engine relaxing and easy to do. Sometimes my girlfriend gets mad at me for not paying more attention to her. She says I am always working on my truck.

My brother

By CRYSTAL BENAVENTE

Do you have a family member whom you admire? The person I most respect and admire is my older brother, Andrew. He encourages me to do my best in everything I do. He will not allow me to give up on anything. By his example, I do my best.

As a 19-year old, I have many challenges in school and in my personal life. My brother Andrew is always there to support me. We go through some brother-sister arguments sometimes, but no matter what the situation is, he still stands by me. I am more than grateful to have him in my life.

At times I feel completely lost in my own world, not understanding what I am doing. My brother can always see that I need help. He helps me until I get closer to my goals. For him, giving up is not an answer.

I have watched my brother go through challenges in his own life. This has made it easier for me to believe that anything is possible. I have also become more committed to try harder and to move forward and make things better for myself and my future.

Among all my siblings, he is the most hardworking. He always leads me down a smarter and more sensible path. My brother, Andrew, has been and continues to be a loving role model in my life. He has helped me to reach school and personal goals. His constant advice helps me to have greater faith in myself and in my plans for a better future.



Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam Homepage: [www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/](http://www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/)

# The Weather

## 5-Day Forecast for Saipan and Tinian

TODAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
Partly cloudy with isolated showers. Northeast winds 15 to 20 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers. Northeast winds 15 to 20 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
▲ 86° ▼ 75°	▲ 86° ▼ 76°	▲ 86° ▼ 76°	▲ 86° ▼ 76°	▲ 86° ▼ 76°

### Micronesia

Guam and Rota	Partly Cloudy	▲ 85 ▼ 77
Palau	Thunderstorms	▲ 85 ▼ 79
Yap	Showers	▲ 89 ▼ 78
Chuuk	Showers	▲ 90 ▼ 79
Pohnpei	Showers	▲ 86 ▼ 80
Kosrae	Showers	▲ 86 ▼ 80
Majuro	Showers	▲ 86 ▼ 79

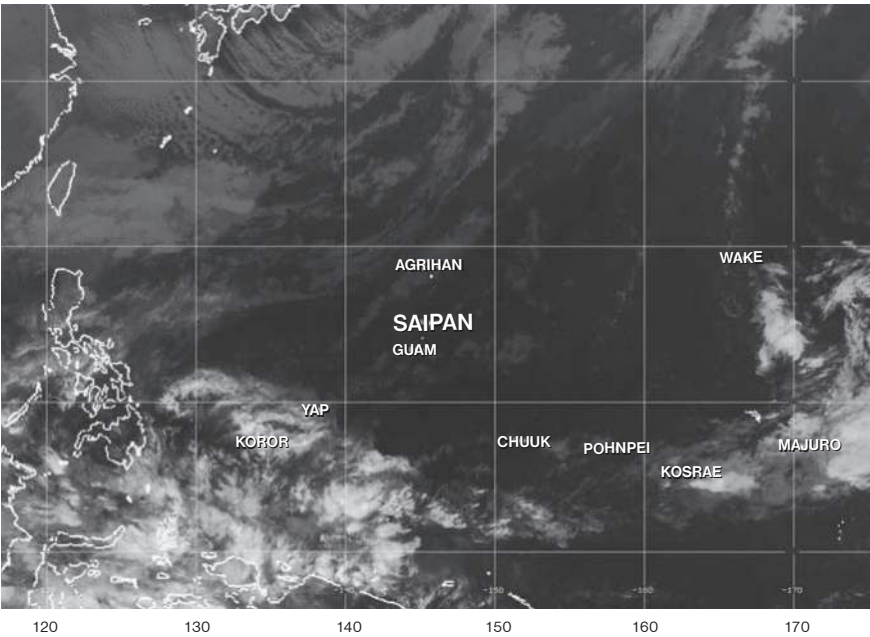
### Around The Globe

Auckland	Partly Cloudy	▲ 68 ▼ 61
Beijing	Sunny	▲ 54 ▼ 26
Hong Kong	Mostly Cloudy	▲ 65 ▼ 59
Honolulu	Showers	▲ 76 ▼ 68
London	Partly Cloudy	▲ 61 ▼ 44
Los Angeles	Sunny	▲ 65 ▼ 49
Manila	Thundershowers	▲ 87 ▼ 80
Melbourne	Cloudy	▲ 82 ▼ 60
Miami	Mostly Sunny	▲ 80 ▼ 68
New York	Showers	▲ 71 ▼ 49
Osaka	Sunny	▲ 50 ▼ 36
Paris	Sunny	▲ 59 ▼ 40
Pusan	Mostly Sunny	▲ 52 ▼ 38
Rome	Sunny	▲ 69 ▼ 44
Salem	Ice	▲ 45 ▼ 38
San Francisco	Rain	▲ 59 ▼ 55
Seoul	Showers	▲ 49 ▼ 31
Tokyo	Mostly Sunny	▲ 49 ▼ 36
Washington, DC	Mostly Sunny	▲ 78 ▼ 53

### Tides

Saipan Harbor				
12:25 AM	Today	High Tide:	1.8 Feet	
6:07 AM	Today	Low Tide:	0.9 Feet	
11:34 AM	Today	High Tide:	2.0 Feet	
6:53 PM	Today	Low Tide:	0.2 Feet	

### Yesterday's Satellite Image



**PICTURE TIME: 1:00PM, MONDAY, MARCH 12, 2012**  
Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

A cold front extends southwestward from 25N154E to 18N145E then continues as a shear line to 10N133E. Patchy clouds and scattered showers are found along and up to 250 miles northwest of this boundary. Surface winds converging toward a disturbance centered near 1N130E are producing scattered showers and a few thunderstorms south of Koror south of a line from 7N130E to 4N144E. An upper-level trough curves southwestward from 22N180 through a circulation centered south of Wake Island at 15N168E to end near 7N163E. Upper-level divergence east of the trough combined with a trade-wind surge near 170E is generating scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms southeast of Wake Island and over the Marshall islands 3N and 18N from 166E to 177E.

### Sunrise/Sunset

Today	6:26 AM	6:27 PM
Wednesday	6:26 AM	6:27 PM
Thursday	6:25 AM	6:27 PM
Friday	6:24 AM	6:27 PM
Saturday	6:23 AM	6:27 PM

### Moonrise/Moonset

Today	11:23 PM	10:02 AM
Wednesday		11:00 AM
Thursday	12:23 AM	11:58 AM
Friday	1:19 AM	12:57 PM
Saturday	2:12 AM	1:54 PM

Note: Blank spaces indicate that a rising or a setting did not occur during that 24-hour interval.

## GET YOUR PICTURES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS PUBLISHED—FOR FREE

The *Saipan Tribune* accepts for FREE publication the following:

#### PICTURES

- ISLAND SNAPSHOTS Birthdays, baptisms, christenings, family gatherings, reunions, club activities, and other community-related events.
- BIRTHDAY GREETINGS A way for families and friends to greet their loved ones, accompanied by a picture of the person celebrating his/her birthday.
- BUSINESS Corporate donations, volunteer work, promotions, granting of awards, team-building exercises, meetings and other activities by members of the business community.
- SAMUT SARI Pictures from the islands' Filipino community, primarily focusing on Filipino activities, gatherings, get-togethers, volunteer work, etc.
- TRAVELOGUE Pictures of off-island travels. Contributors may submit up to 10 pictures for consideration.

#### ANNOUNCEMENTS

- COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Announcements of upcoming activities of organizations, community clubs, government agencies, and private companies.

#### CAMPUS BULLETIN

Announcements of upcoming activities in public and private schools, as well as calendar of activities. May include PTSA meetings, enrollment procedures.

#### REQUIREMENTS

- For pictures:**
- Photos should be original and not copyrighted. Contributors must have the right to allow the *Saipan Tribune* to publish the pictures.
  - Digital pictures should be high-resolution (minimum of 800kb).
  - Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and phone number.
  - Photos must have been taken in the last two months.
  - For birthday greetings, must be submitted no later than 12 noon of the previous day to make it to next day's edition.
- For announcements:**
- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when),

the name of contact person, and a phone number.

- Must be submitted no later than 12 noon to make it to next day's edition.

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  - Fax: (670) 235-3740
  - Mail: PMB 34, P.O. Box 10001, Saipan, CNMI 96950
  - Drop off: 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan
- To check if contributions are received, call (670) 235-6397, 235-2440, 235-8747

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- The *Saipan Tribune* will decide how often community announcements are going to be published.
- For Travelogue, the *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to choose which pictures to publish.

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**SUBSCRIPTION** Published Monday to Saturday, *Saipan Tribune* offers door-to-door on-island delivery at an annual rate of \$160. For additional subscription information, call (670) 235-8747 or 235-2769, or fax 235-3740.

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## FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF JANUARY 11, 2012

DEPARTURES	ARRIVALS
<b>GUAM (GUM)-ROTA (ROP)</b> C05062 2:10am 2:40am 1, 5	<b>ROTA (ROP)-GUAM (GUM)</b> C05064 5:15am 5:45am 1, 5
<b>SAIPAN (SPN)-ROTA (ROP)</b> C05064 4:15am 4:50am 1, 5	<b>ROTA (ROP)-SAIPAN (SPN)</b> C05062 3:10am 3:45am 1, 5
<b>SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)</b> C05064 4:15am 5:45am 1, 5 via ROP C05070 4:35am 5:25am 2, 3, 4, 6, 7 C05068 8:25am 9:15am Daily C05074 12:10pm 1:00pm 1, 4, 5, 7 C05076 3:10pm 4:00pm 1, 2, 4, 5, 7 C05078 6:50pm 7:40pm 1, 2, 4, 5, 7 C05078 7:00pm 7:50pm 3, 6 C05072 9:55pm 10:45pm 1, 2, 4, 5, 7 C05072 10:05pm 10:55pm 3, 6	<b>GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN</b> C05062 2:10am 3:45am 1, 5 via ROP C05069 2:45am 3:35am 2, 3, 4, 6, 7 C05071 7:00am 7:50am Daily C05073 10:05am 10:55am 1, 2, 4, 5, 7 C05075 1:40pm 2:30pm 1, 4, 5, 7 C05077 5:30pm 6:20pm 1, 2, 4, 5, 7 C05077 5:40pm 6:30pm 3, 6 C05079 8:35pm 9:25pm 1, 2, 4, 5, 7 C05079 8:45pm 9:35pm 3, 6
<b>SAIPAN-NARITA (NRT)</b> DL287 6:00am 8:40am Daily DL285 6:35am 9:15am 1, 3, 5, 7 DL297 4:25pm 7:15pm Daily	<b>NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN</b> DL298 10:25am 3:00pm Daily DL288 8:40pm 1:15am+1 Daily DL286 7:40pm 12:20am+1 2, 4, 6, 7
<b>SAIPAN-OSAKA (KIX)</b> OZ119 4:00am 6:40am Daily	<b>OSAKA (KIX)-SAIPAN</b> OZ120 9:50pm 2:20am+1 Daily
<b>SAIPAN-SEOUL (ICN)</b> OZ606 2:10am 6:00am 1 OZ606 2:40am 6:30am 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 OZ119 4:00am 11:20am Daily via KIX OZ604 3:20pm 7:10pm Daily	<b>SEOUL (ICN)-SAIPAN</b> OZ603 9:00am 2:20pm Daily OZ120 7:10pm 2:20am+1 Daily via KIX OZ605 7:40pm 1:00am+1 7 OZ605 8:10pm 1:30am+1 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
<b>SAIPAN-BUSAN (PUS)</b> OZ608 3:35am 7:05am 4, 7 DL581 4:10am 7:30am 1, 5	<b>BUSAN (PUS)-SAIPAN</b> OZ607 9:00pm 2:20am+1 3, 6 DL580 10:10pm 2:55am+1 4, 7
<b>SAIPAN-GUANGZHOU (CAN)</b> 3U8646 4:20am 7:30am 2, 6	<b>GUANGZHOU (CAN)-SAIPAN</b> 3U8645 7:40pm 3:00am+1 1, 5
<b>SAIPAN-SHANGHAI (PVG)</b> 3U8648 6:10am 8:40am 1, 4, 5, 7	<b>SHANGHAI (PVG)-SAIPAN</b> 3U8647 10:40pm 5:00am+1 3, 4, 6, 7
<b>SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)</b> OZ606/701 2:10am 11:15am 1 via ICN OZ606/701 2:40am 11:15am 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN C05070/191 4:35am 9:45am 3, 6 via GUM DL287/173 6:00am 10:25pm Daily via NRT C05068/183 8:25am 9:25pm 2, 5 via GUM C05068/183 8:25am 9:40pm 1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM C05076/183 3:10pm 9:25pm 2, 5 via GUM C05076/183 3:10pm 9:40pm 1, 4, 7 via GUM C05076/193 3:10pm 11:00pm 2, 5 via GUM-Palau OZ604/703 3:20pm 11:00pm Daily via ICN C05072/PR111 9:55pm 7:50am+1 1, 5, 7 via GUM C05072/PR111 10:05pm 7:50am+1 3, 6 via GUM	<b>MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN</b> DL172/288 8:00am 1:15am+1 Daily via NRT C0190/5077 10:55am 6:30pm 3, 6 via GUM C0190/5079 10:55am 9:35pm 3, 6 via GUM OZ702/605 12:30pm 1:00am+1 7 via ICN OZ702/605 12:30pm 1:30am+1 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN PR110/C05071 10:15pm 7:50am+1 1, 3, 5, 6, 7 via GUM C0192/5071 10:25pm 7:50am+1 2, 5 via GUM-Palau C0184/5071 11:10pm 7:50am+1 1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM OZ704/603 11:40pm 2:20pm Daily via ICN C0184/5071 11:59pm 7:50am+1 2, 5 via GUM
<b>SAIPAN-HONG KONG (HKG)</b> OZ606/721 2:10am 12:00pm 1 via ICN OZ606/721 2:40am 12:00pm 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN C05076/147 3:10pm 10:25pm 1, 5 via GUM OZ604/723 3:20pm 10:30pm Daily via ICN OZ604/749 3:20pm 10:50pm Daily via ICN	<b>HONG KONG (HKG)-SAIPAN</b> OZ724/603 12:30am 2:20pm Daily via ICN OZ750/603 1:00am 2:20pm Daily via ICN OZ722/605 1:15pm 1:00am+1 7 via ICN OZ722/605 1:15pm 1:30am+1 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN C0180/5071 11:15pm 7:50am+1 1, 5 via GUM
LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); 5K: FlyGuam; 3U: Sichuan Airlines; CZ: China Southern; CO: Continental; DL: Delta Airlines; OZ: Asiana	
ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. The <i>Saipan Tribune</i> is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)	

## FREEDOM AIR FLIGHT SCHEDULE

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency	Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
<b>Guam-Rota</b>				FRE 115	13:00	13:10	Daily
FRE 100	7:30	8:00	Daily	FRE 117	14:30	14:40	Daily
<b>Rota-Saipan</b>				FRE 119	16:00	16:10	Daily
FRE 100	8:20	8:50	Daily	FRE 121	16:40	16:50	Daily
<b>Guam-Rota</b>				FRE 123	17:40	17:50	Daily
FRE 300	17:00	17:30	Daily	FRE 125	18:30	18:40	Daily
<b>Rota-Saipan</b>							
FRE 100	17:50	18:20	Daily	<b>Tinian-Saipan</b>			
<b>Saipan-Rota</b>				FRE 102	7:05	7:15	Daily
FRE 200	9:30	10:00	Daily	FRE 104	7:50	8:00	Daily
<b>Rota-Guam</b>				FRE 106	8:20	8:30	Daily
FRE 400	18:55	19:25	Daily	FRE 108	9:00	9:10	Daily
<b>Rota-Guam</b>				FRE 110	10:00	10:10	Daily
FRE 400	19:40	20:10	Daily	FRE 112	11:05	11:15	Daily
<b>Saipan-Tinian</b>				FRE 114	12:00	12:10	Daily
FRE 101	6:45	6:55	Daily	FRE 116	13:30	13:40	Daily
FRE 103	7:30	7:40	Daily	FRE 118	14:50	15:00	Daily
FRE 105	8:00	8:10	Daily	FRE 120	16:20	16:30	Daily
FRE 107	8:40	8:50	Daily	FRE 122	17:00	17:10	Daily
FRE 109	9:10	9:20	Daily	FRE 124	18:05	18:15	Daily
FRE 111	10:45	10:55	Daily	FRE 126	18:50	19:00	Daily

## NMI CRIME STOPPERS

Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:

- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- \*11 on any PTI cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at [www.nmicrimestoppers.com](http://www.nmicrimestoppers.com)



# Business

## Brazil's new consumer class flocks to US to buy

**RIO DE JANEIRO (AP)**—The overstuffed bags filling Fernando Mello's luggage cart wobbled precariously as the gym owner made his way home one morning through Rio's international airport. Navigating the terminal, Mello was part of a horde of other Brazilian travelers returning with loot found in the strip malls and discount outlets of southern Florida.

Mello's girlfriend's freshly purchased Michael Kors handbag in gold lame sat atop four bulging suitcases like a shining crown—a testament to the new-found consumer power of Brazilian travelers, who now spend more per capita than any other visitors to the U.S.

In fact, Brazilians are spending so much that flights with Brazil's top airline TAM originating in the U.S. have had to carry more fuel to accommodate the dramatically overweight baggage.

"We left with nothing, just a piece of hand luggage," said the 30-year-old Mello. "We go to the U.S. once a year, stay in great hotels, have a fantastic holiday and shop till we drop and it's still cheaper than shopping in Brazil. It's a no-brainer."

According to the latest statistics, Brazilians spent \$5.9 billion in the U.S. in 2010 in a tsunami of cash that's shifting Ameri-

can immigration practices and boosting economies in hard-hit parts of the U.S. that remain in the doldrums.

President Barack Obama recently ordered the State Department to speed up the visa application process for tourists coming from Brazil, China and other nations with newly flush consumers.

After suffering decades of hyperinflation, Brazil has ridden high commodity prices along with some of the world's biggest offshore oil discoveries to expand its economy, lift millions out of poverty and multiply the ranks of the country's deep-pocketed elite.

The buying binge also shows off the muscle of the country's mushrooming middle class, which has expanded by 40 million people since 2003. That's been bolstered by the growing use of credit cards, bank loans and other forms of consumer credit.

But it's not just the easy money that has transformed Brazilians into world-class shoppers.

Stiff tariffs on all imports push the prices of foreign-made goods into the stratosphere at home. And though domestic products are not known for their quality, their prices have risen in recent years as demand is higher than production, making



In this March 4, 2012 photo, Beatriz Cesari, left, and her friend Sylvia Schleier, from Sao Paulo, Brazil, look at watches as they shop in Miami, Florida.

it cheaper to buy nearly everything in the U.S., from clothes to toys and kitchen gear and even soaps and shampoos.

As a result, Brazilians spend more in the U.S. than visitors from any other nation—around \$5,400 per person in 2010, with experts estimating the number growing last year. Japanese tourists followed, spending \$4,300 each.

Unniverson Liborio, a 60-year-

old chef based in New York, disembarked at Rio's airport with bags stuffed with hot buys for his grandchildren—baby onesies, a pink plastic Barbie mansion and 700 disposable diapers.

"I got this all for maybe \$300, total," said the Brazilian-born Liborio, who has lived in the U.S. for decades. "Here I couldn't have bought even half the diapers for the same price, and forget about everything else."

Price discrepancies are particularly pronounced when it comes to luxury goods.

With the number of millionaire households here forecast to more than triple by 2020, Brazil is widely regarded as the new El Dorado of luxury, and top-tier labels such as Italy's Prada and Bottega Veneta are scrambling to get a foothold.

Because of the staggering import taxes, however, the high-

end handbags, shoes, garments and electronics can end up retailing for several times more here than in Europe or the U.S. The iPhone 4S with 16 gigabytes of memory costs \$1,515 without a contract on Apple's Brazilian website. The same phone retails without a contract for \$649 on Apple's U.S. website.

And so it is that hordes of Brazilians swarm Miami's Apple Store while the Girls from Ipanema snap up designer purses on New York's Fifth Avenue.

Brazilian shoppers are easy to spot—they're the ones at malls with huge suitcases on rollers, spending from store to store until their baggage won't hold any more.

Aristoteles Guimaraes, a 36-year-old from Sao Paulo, was busy recently at Miami's Sawgrass Mill mall while on a special four-day shopping mission with a budget of \$4,000.

"I came exclusively to buy things for my baby," said Guimaraes, whose wife is seven months pregnant and remained back home. "I came to buy everything. Things here cost on average one-third of what they would in Brazil."

His big find: an Italian baby stroller that would have run him \$1,300 in Sao Paulo but was \$350 in the U.S.

## Obama's health care law: A trek, not a sprint

**WASHINGTON (AP)**—It took only a year to set up Medicare. But if President Barack Obama's health care law survives Supreme Court scrutiny, it will be nearly a decade before all its major pieces are in place.

And that means even if Obama is re-elected, he won't be in office to oversee completion of his signature domestic policy accomplishment, assuming Republicans don't succeed in repealing it.

The law's carefully orchestrated phase-in is evidence of what's at stake in the Supreme Court deliberations that start March 26.

The Affordable Care Act gradually reorganizes one-sixth of the U.S. economy to cover most of the nation's 50 million uninsured, while simultaneously trying to restrain costs and prevent disruptions to the majority already with coverage.

Despite the political rhetoric about what "Obamacare" is doing to the nation, only a fraction of the law is in effect.

"We really haven't seen the main game," said Drew Altman, president of the California-based Kaiser Family

Foundation, a nonprofit information clearinghouse on the health care system. "The major provisions that will affect the most people and cost the most money don't go into effect until 2014 or later."

What has taken effect in the two years since the law was enacted has produced both successes and clunkers, and some surprises.

Few expected a relatively minor provision tacked on late in the legislative process to be its biggest success so far. But allowing young adults to stay on their parents' insurance until age 26 has added nearly 2.5 million people to the coverage rolls, at no cost to taxpayers.

Despite Republican pledges to repeal the overhaul, it's arguably the Obama administration that has done more to scale it back.

Health and Human Services Secretary Kathleen Sebelius decided to pull the plug on a long-term care insurance program seen as a budget drain. She also decided that Washington would not dictate a basic health benefits package for the country, allowing each state to set its own, within limits.

## Strong 3 months of hiring as US adds 227,000 jobs

**WASHINGTON (AP)**—The United States added 227,000 jobs in February, the latest display of the breadth and strength of the economic recovery. The country has put together the most impressive three months of job growth since before the Great Recession.

The unemployment rate stayed at 8.3 percent. It was the first time in six months it didn't fall, and that was because a half-million Americans started looking for work. In the past two months, almost a million have started looking.

"I have more optimism," said Freda Bratcher, 54, who had worked as a substance abuse counselor but has been unemployed 16 months. She had stopped searching, but showed up Friday at a Miami career center after some of her friends landed jobs.

"There's something out there for me," she said. "And if other people are getting

hired, then why not me?"

The Labor Department, in its monthly jobs report, said Friday that December and January, already two of the best months for jobs since the recession, were even stronger than first estimated.

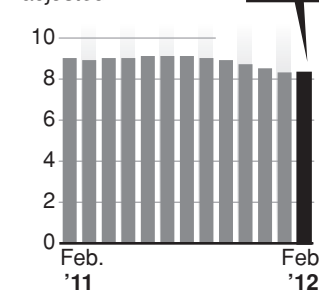
January job growth was revised higher by 41,000 to 284,000. December job growth was raised by 20,000 to 223,000. The overall job growth for February of 227,000 beat economists' estimate of 210,000.

"It's a very strong report," said Bob Baur, chief global economist at Principal Global Investors, an asset management company. "I could hardly find anything not to like in it."

Since the beginning of December, the country has added 734,000 jobs. The only three-month stretch that was better since the recession ended was March through May 2010, when the government was hir-

### Jobless rate

Percent of civilian labor force that is unemployed, by month, seasonally adjusted.



© 2012 MCT  
Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

ing tens of thousands of temporary workers for the census.

Before that, the last stretch that was better was February through April 2006. A three-month gain of 734,000 is rough-

## FHB, GBM announces nominees for 2012 Businesswoman of the Year

**HAGÂTÑA, Guam**—First Hawaiian Bank and *Guam Business Magazine* are pleased to announce the nominees of the 2012 Businesswoman of the Year Maga'haga award.

The 12 nominees are Lucy M. Alcorn, President, GFS Group; Katie F. Black, Sales Account Manager, United; Laila Y. Boyer, President, Marianas Variety News and Views; Shelly V. Cal-

vo, Owner, Oxygene and Diva's Café; Jaylene Kent, President, Isla Paint and Roofing Supply; Sandra Low, Owner, Opus One; Françoise Martin, Chiropractor, Walking Tall Clinic; Layla Raymanova, Realtor, Century 21 Commonwealth Realty; Annette T. Santos, Associate Professor, School of Business and Public Administration, University of Guam; Frances C. Schier,

General Manager, Travel Pacificana; Mary P. Torre, President, Guam Hotel & Restaurant Association; and Andrea S. Whitt, Executive Director, Customer Service, IT&E.

The Maga'haga Award will be presented at the Businesswoman of the Year gala on Saturday, April 28, 2012 at the Aurora Resort & Spa in conjunction with the release of the Guam Business Mag-

azine May/June issue, featuring a commissioned photo study of the recipient on its cover. Proceeds from the gala will fund scholarships at the University of Guam, Guam Community College and Northern Marianas College.

Tickets for the gala on April 28 may be purchased from Faye Varias who can be reached at (671) 688-6294 or fayevarias@gmail.com. (PR)



# Nation

## Candidates spar before key Miss., Ala. primaries

**BIRMINGHAM, Ala. (AP)**—Republican presidential hopeful Rick Santorum on Sunday nudged rival Newt Gingrich to step aside, arguing a head-to-head contest between himself and Mitt Romney should “occur sooner rather than later.” A defiant Gingrich predicted vic-

tories in Tuesday’s primaries in Alabama and Mississippi and called Romney the weakest GOP front-runner in nearly a century.

Santorum and Gingrich were campaigning hard two days before what has become a potentially decisive Southern

showdown for the Republican contenders battling to challenge President Barack Obama in the fall.

Losing Alabama and Mississippi would effectively spell the end for Gingrich, who has banked his waning prospects on an all-Southern strategy.

The former House speaker’s lone primary wins have been in South Carolina and Georgia, a state he represented in Congress for 20 years.

A win for Romney in Alabama, where polling shows a tight contest between Romney, Gingrich and Santorum, could all but bring the GOP nominating contest to a close.

The former Massachusetts governor has built a substantial delegate lead against his rivals but has failed so far to win a state in the deep South, home to the Republican Party’s most dedicated base voters. An Alabama victory would provide a key breakthrough for Romney among the socially conservative and evangelical voters who have thus far proven resistant to his candidacy.

Santorum, who has battled to be Romney’s chief conservative foe, burnished his standing with a decisive win in Saturday’s caucuses in Kansas. The former Pennsylvania senator also carried contests last week in Oklahoma and Tennessee, giving him a foothold in the South.

On NBC’s “Meet the Press,” Santorum said Gingrich’s recent stretch of weak showings suggests he has few options left in the race. Gingrich placed third in Kansas and dead last in Wyoming, whose caucuses Romney won easily Saturday.

“The speaker can stay in as long as he wants, but I think the better opportunity to make sure that we nominate a conservative is to give us an opportunity to go head-to-head with Gov. Romney at some point and

hopefully that will occur sooner rather than later,” Santorum said, adding he wasn’t directly asking Gingrich to get out.

Santorum attended Baptist church services in Tupelo, Miss., Sunday morning and had campaign stops scheduled in Meridian and Gulfport later in the day. Gingrich was also campaigning in Mississippi, where he attended church services at the First Baptist Church of Brandon and later headlined a rally there.

During church services, Gingrich stepped forward at the invitation of Pastor Scott Thomas to describe his religious evolution.

Gingrich, who recently converted to Catholicism, never mentioned his new faith but touched on his well-publicized, messy marital history.

### Analysis: Obama’s Afghanistan problem gets worse

**WASHINGTON (AP)**—President Barack Obama has a PR problem when it comes to Afghanistan, to say the least.

Once the must-fight war for America, the decade-long mission has spiraled into a series of U.S. missteps and violent outbreaks that have left few ardent political supporters. After NATO detained a U.S. soldier Sunday for allegedly killing sleeping Afghan villagers, Republicans and Democrats alike pointed to the stress on troops after years of fighting and reiterated calls to leave by the end of 2014 as promised, if not sooner.

“It’s just not a good situation,” said Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid, D-Nev. “Our troops are under such tremendous pressure in Afghanistan. It’s a war like no other war we’ve been involved in. ... We’re moving out, as the president said. I think it’s the right thing to do.”

Likewise, many Republicans—who as a party fought against a quick exodus in Iraq and criti-

cized Obama’s 2008 presidential campaign promise to end the war—are now reluctant to embrace a continued commitment in Afghanistan.

“There’s something profoundly wrong with the way we’re approaching the whole region, and I think it’s going to get substantially worse, not better,” said GOP presidential hopeful Newt Gingrich. “I think that we’re risking the lives of young men and women in a mission that may, frankly, not be doable.”

American voters appear frustrated as well. In results from a Washington Post-ABC News poll released Sunday, 55 percent of respondents said they think most Afghans oppose what the United States is trying to do there. And 60 percent said the war in Afghanistan has been “not worth fighting.”

The latest incident in Afghanistan was disturbing: At 3 a.m. Sunday, an American staff sergeant from Joint Base

Lewis-McChord, Wash., allegedly wandered 500 yards from a special operations base in the southern Kandahar province and begun shooting villagers as they slept. As many as 16 Afghans were killed, including nine children, before the shooter apparently returned to base and turned himself in.

One eyewitness described the body of a young boy, apparently wearing red pajamas, lying lifeless in the back of a minibus. That and other searing images, including an AP photographer’s confirmation of burned bodies at the scene, easily eclipsed Friday’s upbeat announcement that the U.S. and Afghanistan had agreed on the transfer of Afghan detainees to Afghan control.

Obama and top U.S. officials quickly condemned the attack and offered their condolences to families of the victims. Obama and Defense Secretary Leon Panetta called Afghan President Hamid Karzai, both vowing to hold any perpetrators accountable.



Republican presidential candidate, former Pennsylvania Sen. Rick Santorum waves to supporters at a rally at Lookout Steakhouse in Gulfport, Miss., on Sunday, March 12, 2012.

### Advocates: States should give foster kids lawyers

**MIAMI (AP)**—When Lauren entered foster care at age 16, she was too scared to go to the court hearings that were deciding her future. She was wary of the judge and struggled to navigate the complex legal system of dependency court on top of adjusting to life in a group home.

But Lauren’s attorney eventually persuaded her to attend, convincing her of how important it was for the judge to hear about Lauren’s experiences in her own words.

Having legal help like that is uncommon for the nation’s more than 400,000 foster children. Massachusetts, Connecticut, and more than a dozen other states require that foster children have appointed attorneys. But compliance is sporadic because of shrinking budgets. And Florida has a pilot program that advocates are pushing other states to try.

“These are abused and neglected kids, for whom the most life-altering decisions will be made in juvenile courts across the country ... and yet so many kids are denied this most basic right every day,” said attorney Ira Lustbader, associate director for the advocacy group Children’s Rights.

Lauren was appointed an attorney a few years ago after a federal court judge ruled—in

response to a lawsuit—that foster children in two metropolitan Atlanta counties, DeKalb and Fulton, are entitled to be represented. It’s a ruling that supporters, including the American Bar Association, are using to build a national campaign for children to have legal counsel.

When Lauren fought with another girl and was charged simple battery and assault in adult criminal court, her attorney, Aviance Jenkins, was there to give the judge details about Lauren’s history in foster care in DeKalb County. The charges were eventually dropped.

“It’s important to let (foster children) know they have a voice and there’s someone willing to think on their behalf,” said Lauren, who is now 18. Her lawyer only gave her first name to protect her from the stigma others sometimes associate with being in foster care.

In the past five years, DeKalb County grew from two lawyers representing foster children to a department with 11 attorneys, plus investigators and paralegals. The average caseload before the judge’s ruling was about 850. Now, it is now between 550 and 650 and every child is seen four to six times a year. The average amount of time children in the county spend in foster care has dropped

from nine months to less than three, according to statistics given by its director.

Fulton County went from four lawyers for 2,000 kids to about 17 lawyers.

Florida and other states say children with attorneys do move through the system faster, which could save money. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services recently awarded a \$5 million grant to the University of Michigan to study how to better connect foster children with legal help. The American Bar Association recently wrote legislation and is urging lawmakers in several states, including Florida, to require attorneys for all foster children.

A pilot program in Palm Beach County, Fla., showed children with effective counsel in dependency cases found permanent homes at about twice the rate of unrepresented children, according to a 2008 study by Chapin Hall, the University of Chicago’s research arm. That program, which has 14 attorneys with an average caseload of 35 kids, works with about 800 foster children a year, costing taxpayers about \$1.7 million. But advocates say that’s less than what the state would pay for extended stays in foster care. Florida spends between \$150 to \$200 a day to care for each child.

### ACROSS THE NATION

#### Search suspended for 4 men missing off Wash. coast

**SEATTLE (AP)**—The U.S. Coast Guard suspended its search Sunday for four men missing from a fishing trawler off the Washington coast, saying it’s unlikely the men are still alive. Rescue crews had searched through the night after an early Saturday distress signal from the 70-foot Lady Cecelia led them to a debris field, an empty lifeboat and an oil sheen several miles off the coast. By Sunday morning, crews in Coast Guard cutters and an MH-60 helicopter had covered 640 square miles, Petty Officer Shawn Eggert said.

#### Maryland college student charged in rampage threat

**COLLEGE PARK, Md. (AP)**—A University of Maryland student has been arrested and charged with posting an Internet threat claiming he planned to go on a shooting rampage on campus hoping to kill as many people as possible. Campus police said in a statement that 19-year-old Alexander Song of Fulton, Md., has been identi-

fied as the person who posted on a website plans for a rampage that would “kill enough people to make it to national news.” The message also warned people to “stay away from the mall.” Police did not elaborate. Song was taken to a hospital for a psychiatric evaluation after his arrest Sunday. Song, who was not armed when he was arrested, faces a misdemeanor charge of disturbing school activities.

#### Utah man recognizes suspect in video: his son

**WOODS CROSS, Utah (AP)**—A Utah man persuaded his son to surrender to authorities after recognizing him as a suspect in a computer store burglary while watching a TV news program, officers said. The two were eating breakfast Friday morning when the father recognized his son in surveillance tapes that police released on the burglary, said Woods Cross police Detective Adam Osoro. Jeremy Blair, 26, of Kaysville, turned himself in later Friday to the Davis County Sheriff’s Office, the Standard-Examiner of Ogden and Deseret News reported.



# Asia

## US Army sergeant kills 16 in Afghan villages

**BALANDI, Afghanistan** (AP)—Moving from house to house, a U.S. Army sergeant opened fire Sunday on Afghan villagers as they slept, killing 16 people—mostly women and children—in an attack that reignited fury at the U.S. presence following a wave of deadly protests over Americans burning Qurans.

The attack threatened the deepest breach yet in U.S.-Afghan relations, raising questions both in Washington and Kabul about why American troops are still fighting in Afghanistan after 10 years of conflict and the killing of Osama bin Laden.

The killing spree, the worst atrocity committed by U.S. forces during the Afghan war, comes amid deepening public outrage spurred by last month's Quran burnings and an earlier video purportedly showing American Marines urinating on dead Taliban militants.

The Quran burnings sparked weeks of violent protests and attacks that left some 30 Afghans dead, despite an apology from President Barack Obama. Six U.S. service members were also killed by their fellow Afghan soldiers, although the tensions had just started to calm down.

Residents said Sunday's attack began around 3 a.m. in two villages in Panjwai district, a rural region outside Kandahar that is the cradle of the Taliban and where coalition forces have fought for control for years. The villages are about 500 yards (meters) from a U.S. base in a region that was the focus of Obama's military surge strategy

in the south starting in 2009.

Villagers described cowering in fear as gunshots rang out as a soldier stalked house after house firing on those inside. They said he entered three homes in all and set fire to some of the bodies. Eleven of the dead were from a single family, and nine of the victims were children.

Some residents said they believed there were multiple attackers, given the carnage.

"One man can't kill so many people. There must have been many people involved," said Bacha Agha of Balandi village. "If the government says this is just one person's act we will not accept it. ... After killing those people they also burned the bodies."

But U.S. officials said the shooter, identified as an Army staff sergeant, acted alone, leaving his base in southern Afghanistan and opening fire on sleeping families in two villages. Initial reports indicated he returned to the base after the shooting and turned himself in. He was in custody at a NATO base in Afghanistan.

The suspect, from Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Wash., was assigned to support a special operations unit of either Green Berets or Navy SEALs engaged in a village stability operation, said a U.S. official, speaking on condition of anonymity because the investigation is still ongoing.

Such operations are among NATO's best hopes for transitioning out of Afghanistan, pairing special operations troops with villagers chosen by village elders to become essentially a



Afghan men sit in a bus with the body of a person who was allegedly killed by a U.S. service member in Panjwai, Kandahar province south of Kabul, Afghanistan, Sunday, March 11, 2012.

sanctioned, armed neighborhood watch.

In a statement, Afghan President Hamid Karzai left open the possibility of more than one shooter. He initially spoke of a single U.S. gunman, then referred to "American forces" quoted a 15-year-old survivor named Rafiullah, who was shot in the leg, as telling Karzai in a phone call that "soldiers" broke into his house, woke up his family and began shooting them.

"This is an assassination, an intentional killing of innocent civilians and cannot be forgiven," Karzai said.

Obama phoned the Afghan leader to express his shock and sadness, and offered condolences

es to the grieving families and to the people of Afghanistan.

In a statement released by the White House, Obama called the attack "tragic and shocking" and not representative of "the exceptional character of our military and the respect that the United States has for the people of Afghanistan." He vowed "to get the facts as quickly as possible and to hold accountable anyone responsible."

The violence over the Quran burnings had already spurred calls in the U.S. for a faster exit strategy from the 10-year-old Afghan war. Obama even said recently that "now is the time for us to transition." But he also said he had no plan to change the current timetable that has Afghans taking control of security countrywide by the end of 2014.

In the wake of the Quran burn-

ings, the top U.S. commander in Afghanistan, Gen. John Allen, visited troops at a base that was attacked last month and urged them not to give in to the impulse for revenge.

The tensions between the two countries had appeared to be easing as recently as Friday, when the two governments signed a memorandum of understanding about the transfer of Afghan detainees to Afghan control—a key step toward an eventual strategic partnership to govern U.S. forces in the country.

Now, another wave of anti-American hatred could threaten the entire future of the mission, fueling not only anger among the Afghans whom the coalition is supposed to be defending but also encouraging doubts among U.S. political figures that the long and costly war is worth the sacrifice in lives and treasury.

## Taliban suicide bomber kills 15 in Pakistan

**PESHAWAR, Pakistan** (AP)—A suicide bomber attacked a funeral attended by an anti-Taliban politician in northwest Pakistan on Sunday, killing at least 15 mourners, officials said.

The politician, Khush Dil Khan, escaped unhurt in the blast on the outskirts of Peshawar, the main city in the northwest.

Islamist militants are fighting a vicious war against Pakistani security forces in and around Peshawar, which lies close to border regions with Afghanistan where extremists hold sway.

Thousands of civilians and security officials have been killed over the last few years in the militants attacks, which appeared to have been decreasing lately due to the Pakistani army's operations in the tribal regions and the elimination of several key Taliban and al-Qaida leaders in U.S. drone strikes.

Police officer Abid Rehman said the attacker managed to get inside the compound where

funeral prayers were being held in Badhber village. Peshawar deputy commissioner Siraj Ahmad said the explosion killed 15 people and wounded another 37.

The two officials said several of the wounded people were in critical condition.

"We are devastated," said Zahir Khan, 32, weeping while lying in a hospital bed. His elder brother died in the attack. He said they were chatting when the bomb went off. "I never knew I was going to lose my brother forever."

Khan, the politician, comes from the secular-leaning Awami National Party that holds power in the northwestern Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province. He expressed his party's resolve to continue the struggle against militancy. "It is a fight for the country's survival," he said.

The Pakistani Taliban have targeted several of its leaders in the past. The party has supported various Pakistani military operations against the militants.

"This is a fatal hammer blow on the U.S. military mission in Afghanistan. Whatever sliver of trust and credibility we might have had following the burnings of the Quran is now gone," said David Cortright, the director of policy studies at Notre Dame's Kroc Institute for International Peace Studies and an advocate for a quick withdrawal from Afghanistan.

Gen. Allen offered his regret and "deepest condolences" to the Afghan people for the shootings and vowed to make sure that "anyone who is found to have committed wrong-doing is held fully accountable."

"This deeply appalling incident in no way represents the values of ISAF and coalition troops or the abiding respect we feel for the Afghan people," Allen said in a statement, using the abbreviation for NATO's International Security Assistance Force.

In Panjwai district on Sunday, grieving residents tried to make sense of why they were targeted.

"No Taliban were here. No gunbattle was going on," cried out one woman, who said four people were killed in the village of Alokzai, all members of her family. "We don't know why this foreign soldier came and killed our innocent family members. Either he was drunk or he enjoyed killing civilians."

The other 12 dead were from Balandi village, said Samad Khan, a farmer who lost all 11 members of his family, including women and children. Khan was away from the village when the attack occurred and returned to find his family members shot and burned. One of his neighbors was also killed, he said.

On Saturday, security forces claimed to have killed 39 militants in fighting in Bara district in Khyber tribal region, which is close to Peshawar and is the current focus of anti-Taliban operations. Four security force members were also killed, according to a brief statement from the paramilitary Frontier Corps.

The police said it was not yet clear whether the bombing could be a reaction to the latest fighting.

A Pakistani Taliban spokesman Mohammad Afridi downplayed Saturday's operation against the militants saying that such operations "hardly matter" to the militants. He took responsibility for the Sunday suicide bombing and said the politician was targeted because he had set up a militia to battle against the Taliban.

"These militias are the front lines for the Pakistani army," he told The Associated Press by phone from an undisclosed location.

### ASIAN BRIEFS

#### US, Philippine troops train for 'Japan-like' quake

**MANILA, Philippines** (AP)—U.S. and Philippine troops will train for how to deal with the aftermath should a massive earthquake similar to last year's quake that ravaged northeastern Japan hit Manila. Filipino military spokesman Col. Arnulfo Marcelo Burgos said Sunday that next month's drills would test how troops and disaster-response agencies would deal with a "Japan-like" quake that will be simulated using desktop computers at military headquarters in Manila. The maneuvers will form part of the two allies' annual military exercises. Burgos says Japan, along with Australia, Indonesia, Malaysia, South Korea, Singapore and Vietnam, will send observers to the quake drills.

#### Afghanistan denies alleged smuggling by air force

**KABUL, Afghanistan** (AP)—The Afghan government has denied allegations that some officials in its U.S.-funded air force have been using military aircraft to ferry narcotics and illegal weapons around the country. The Afghan Defense Ministry called the claims "baseless" in a statement Sunday. The Wall Street Journal reported that U.S.-led NATO forces are investigating the allegations, which came from Afghan officers inside and outside the air force. The newspaper said the inquiry is also exploring whether the alleged smuggling was connected to an incident in April in which an Afghan air force colonel gunned down eight U.S. Air Force officers at Kabul airport.

#### Malaysian minister in graft scandal to step down

**KUALA LUMPUR, Malaysia** (AP)—A Malaysian minister said Sunday she will step down amid accusations that her family misused a 250 million ringgit (\$83 million) government loan meant for a cattle project to purchase condominiums, vacations and a Mercedes. The scandal, dubbed "Cowgate," has greatly embarrassed Prime Minister Najib Razak ahead of general elections widely expected to be called by June. After months of resisting calls from critics to step down, Shahrizat Abdul Jalil said she will resign as minister of women, family and community on April 8 once her term as senator ends.

#### Top judge says China needs more legal reforms

**BEIJING** (AP)—More reforms are needed to China's judicial system to overcome lingering problems with transparency and corrupt judges, the country's top judge said Sunday. Supreme People's Court President Wang Shengjun said in his annual report to the National People's Congress, China's parliament, that the court will work to create a better legal environment to protect economic and social development and will deepen judicial reform in 2012. "Some courts have not done well in improving transparency of court affairs and promoting a democratic judicial system," Wang said in delivering the report to an audience that included China's top leaders.



## World

## International push to end Syria crisis stalls

**BEIRUT (AP)**—An international push to end Syria's conflict stalled Sunday as U.N. envoy Kofi Annan left Damascus without a cease-fire and President Bashar Assad's forces pounded opposition areas and clashed with rebels throughout the country.

Western and Arab powers are struggling for ways to stem the bloodshed in the year-old conflict while both the regime and the opposition reject dialogue. Former U.N. Secretary General

Kofi Annan appeared to make little progress during two visits with Assad during his first trip to Syria as the joint U.N.-Arab League envoy.

Annan was seeking an immediate cease-fire to allow for humanitarian aid and the start of a dialogue between all parties on a political solution. After meeting with Assad on Sunday, Annan said he had presented steps to ease the crisis, but gave no details.

"Once it's agreed, it will help launch the process and help end

the crisis on the ground," he told reporters. He called for "reforms that will create a strong foundation for a democratic Syria—a peaceful, stable, pluralistic and prosperous society, based on the rule of law and respect for human rights."

But he said a cease-fire must come first.

"You have to start by stopping the killing and the misery and the abuse that is going on today and then give time for a political settlement."

Assad told Annan on Sunday that a political solution is impossible as long as "terrorist groups" threaten the country, according to Syria's state news service—which reported identical comments after the men met Saturday. The regime blames the uprising on armed groups acting out a foreign conspiracy.

Annan's calls for reform also fall far short of opposition calls for Assad's ouster and the end of his authoritarian regime. Opposition leaders say the thousands killed at the hands of his security forces, many while protesting peacefully, mean they'll accept nothing less.

Annan acknowledged his hard task.

"It's going to be difficult, but we have to have hope," he said before leaving for Qatar.

The conflict has become increasingly bloody during the year since protesters in some impoverished provinces first took to the streets to call for political reform. The government has cracked down hard, and protests have spread, with

some in the opposition taking up arms to attack government troops and defend their towns and neighborhoods.

The U.N. says more than 7,500 people have been killed. Assad's regime and military have remained largely intact while the opposition, though disorganized, shows no sign of relenting on its demands. Few expect a swift resolution.

Government troops shelled areas in and around the northern city of Idlib, activists said, part of a campaign launched Saturday to crush the opposition in its stronghold along the border with Turkey. In some areas they clashed with local rebels fighting under the banner of the loose-knit Free Syrian Army.

The British-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, which relies on a network of activists around Syria, said 16 civilians had been killed in attacks by Syrian forces or in clashes with local rebels in Idlib province. More than five government soldiers were also killed.

An AP photographer in Turk-

ish border villages heard constant artillery pounding, and Turkish residents said they saw Syrian refugees crossing during lulls.

The renewed violence has sent about 1,000 Syrians across the border in the past week, as many as fled during the previous month, a Turkish official said. He spoke on condition of anonymity under government protocol.

Turkey now hosts about 12,500 Syrians, some of the more than 100,000 refugees who have fled to Turkey, Lebanon and Jordan.

Many fear the offensive in Idlib could end up like the regime's campaign against the rebel-held neighborhood of Baba Amr in the central city of Homs. Troops besieged and shelled Baba Amr for almost a month before capturing it on March 1.

Activists say hundreds were killed, and a U.N. official who visited the area last week said she was "horrified" by the destruction in the nearly deserted district.



People remove a speed bump to allow ambulances and fighters' vehicles to drive faster in a neighborhood where fierce fighting lasted for hours between Free Syrian Army fighters and government troops in Idlib, north Syria, Saturday, March 10, 2012.

## 3 killed in 3rd day of Gaza-Israel violence

**GAZA CITY, Gaza Strip (AP)**—Cross-border fighting between Gaza and Israel, touched off by Israel's killing of a top militant leader, showed no signs of letting up on its fourth day.

Gaza militants fired dozens of rockets at Israeli towns, hitting an empty school Sunday, and Israeli airstrikes killed three Gazans, including a boy and a farm guard.

Egypt tried to mediate but failed to end the worst violence in more than a year that has killed 18 Gazans, all but two of them militants, and disrupted the lives of some 1 million Israelis living in Gaza rocket range.

Even so, Israel and Gaza's Hamas rulers seemed eager to avoid a full-scale conflict. A three-week war in three years ago left both sides badly bruised, Israel in the diplomatic arena and Hamas on the battlefield.

In the current round, Hamas has pointedly kept its large rocket arsenal and thousands of fighters out of the confrontation, even though it has not tried to stop two smaller Gaza groups, Islamic Jihad and the Popular Resistance Committees, from launching rockets and mortars.

Israeli Defense Minister Ehud Barak acknowledged that Hamas did not take part in the rocket salvos. Up to now Israel has blamed Hamas for all violence from Gaza because it rules the territory.

Israel's military chief, Lt. Gen. Benny Gantz, said Sunday that "we are not interested in escalation in and of itself."

On a visit to southern Israel, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu pledged the airstrikes would continue as long as necessary. "We have a clear policy: we will hit anyone who plans to harm us, who prepares to harm us and who harms us," he said in a meeting with local leaders.

Israel said it launched Friday's initial airstrike, which killed PRC leader Zuhair al-Qaissi in a car in downtown Gaza, to stop a plan by his splinter group to infiltrate into Israel through Egypt's lawless Sinai Peninsula. Israel says the PRC was behind an attack on the border in August, killing eight Israelis.

Palestinians across the political spectrum accused Israel of deliberately escalating tensions. The groups involved in firing rockets dismissed truce offers presented by Egypt.

"We will not give calm for free, and the blood of our leaders and martyrs will not be spilled in vain," said a PRC spokesman who uses the nom de guerre Abu Mujahed.

Egypt was trying to broker a truce but insisted Israel stop its airstrikes first, said Yasser Othman, Egypt's envoy to the Palestinian Authority. Representatives of militant groups were in Cairo for talks.

A top Islamic Jihad leader, Ziad Nakhala, denied reports that his group had agreed to stop firing rockets. Rocket fire toward Israel continued for a fourth day early Monday, keeping schools closed in the southern part of the country for the second day in a row.

In fresh Israeli airstrikes, a group of rocket launchers were targeted in the northern Gaza Strip.

Another strike in Gaza City wounded some two dozen people, including several children, health officials said.

In the past, similar flare-ups have died out by themselves or with informal cease-fires negotiated by third parties, but there is always a danger of sudden escalation if an attack by either side causes multiple casualties.

## Yemen officials: US airstrikes hit al-Qaida area

**SANAA, Yemen (AP)**—Yemeni military officials said Sunday that U.S. aircraft carried out four airstrikes in a southern province where al-Qaida-linked militants control several key towns.

Two military officials said the airstrikes targeted Khanfar Mountain near the town of Jaar in Abyan province, where al-Qaida is in control. There was no comment from U.S. officials.

In the past, U.S. warplanes have targeted leaders and facilities of al-Qaida in Yemen, considered one of its most dangerous branches. On Saturday, Yemeni officials said U.S. airstrikes killed at least 18 al-Qaida-linked militants in the province of Bayda. Yemeni military officials attributed that attack on the U.S., saying the Yemeni military does not have the capacity to carry out nighttime airstrikes.

The Yemeni officials spoke on condition of anonymity in line with military regulations.

Al-Qaida has taken advantage of a year of internal turmoil to take over parts of southern Yemen. They took control of Jaar last spring and have successfully battled the Yemeni military, expanding their reach north to the neighboring province of Bayda.

The uprising in Yemen, the poorest country in the Arab world, eventually led to the ouster of longtime ruler Ali Abdullah Saleh, who was once a partner in the fight against al-Qaida in Yemen.

U.S. leaders have since thrown their support behind the newly inaugurated Yemeni president, Abed Rabbo Mansour Hadi. He has said that fighting al-Qaida is one of his top priori-

ties, along with restructuring the army and installing new commanders in the south, where officials said Saleh loyalists may have even struck local deals with the militants.

There was no word on casualties from the airstrikes on Sunday, but residents said they could see smoke rising from the area.

A military official said Yemeni airstrikes near the southern city of Jaar a day earlier wounded nine al-Qaida-linked militants and destroyed several military vehicles the group seized in a bold attack on an army base last week.

In that attack, al-Qaida militants sneaked across the desert at dawn to the back lines of Yemeni forces, killing nearly 200 troops and dumping their bodies in the desert

## WORLD BRIEFS

## 14 construction workers killed in fire in Turkey

**ISTANBUL (AP)**—A fire engulfed a tent used as a dormitory for workers at an Istanbul construction site late Sunday, killing 14 people, a local official said. The workers were staying in a giant tent at the construction site of a supermarket, said Necmi Kadioglu, the mayor of Istanbul's Esenyurt district. "We suspect that the fire might have originated from an electrical heater," Kadioglu said, noting the cold weather in Istanbul.

## Canadian wanted for 22 murders nabbed in Panama

**PANAMA CITY (AP)**—Police in Panama say they have captured a fugitive with suspected ties to the Hells Angels motorcycle gang who is wanted in Canada for 22 murders. A police statement says Michel Smith was detained Friday in the Playa Coronado tourist region, 62 miles (100

kilometers) west of Panama City. The statement released Sunday said Smith was captured after a two-month surveillance operation, adding that he is wanted in Canada on 29 charges, including 22 counts of murder.

## Over 100 buried in Congo mass funeral

**BRAZZAVILLE, Republic of Congo (AP)**—Women wearing masks against the odor of death threw themselves over the graves of their dead children, while men had to be restrained to stop them from hurting themselves as more than 100 victims of last week's arms depot explosion were laid to rest in a mass funeral Sunday. Republic of Congo's government scrambled to organize Sunday's mass burial, which took place exactly one week after an arms depot inside a military barracks caught fire, setting off a lethal rain of grenades, mortar rounds, shells and rockets.



# Focus

**KAMPALA, Uganda (AP)**—The young American boy sums up what his father does for a living: “You stop the bad guys from being mean.”

Yes, the father says, but who are the bad guys? The child thinks, then offers a guess: “Star Wars people?”

Though half a world away from this preschooler’s American upbringing, the truth is far more sinister.

The bad guys are Joseph Kony and his Lord’s Resistance Army, a brutal Central Africa militia that has kidnapped thousands of children and forced them to become sex slaves, fight as child soldiers and kill family members during a 26-year campaign of terror.

The father-son conversation is part of a 30-minute video that has rocketed through cyberspace since its release Monday on YouTube. It had been viewed more than 40 million times by late Thursday, propelled by celebrity tweets and fans on Facebook and Twitter, especially teens and young adults.

The video’s premise is that people here in America—and the world beyond—have the power to stop Kony, if only they are willing to spread the word through the power of social media. Called Kony 2012, the goal is to see Kony captured by the end of this year.

The father, Jason Russell, is the co-founder of Invisible Children, an anti-LRA advocacy group, and the film’s director. At one point in the film, he asks his son, Gavin, what he thinks should be done about Kony.

“Stop him,” Gavin responds.

Then, in one of the video’s many slick moments, the boy’s words are quickly echoed by the prosecutor of the International Criminal Court, where Kony is wanted for crimes against humanity.

“Stop him,” Luis Moreno-Ocampo says on camera, “and (that will) solve all the problems.”

Despite an International Criminal Court arrest warrant and the deployment last fall of 100 U.S. Special Forces to four Central African countries to help advise in the fight against Kony, until now, few Americans knew who he was.

To those 99 percent, Russell poses this challenge: Make Kony and his crimes so “famous” that governments view it as imperative that the mission to capture him succeeds.

Celebrities—and teens—have quickly joined the cause.

“Even if its 10 minutes ... Trust me, you NEED to know about this!” tweeted Rhianna.

“This is not a joke. This is serious. TOGETHER we can (hash) MakeAChange and (hash)STOPKRONY -- help another kid in need!” Justin Bieber tweeted.

“Have supported with \$’s and voice and will not stop,” tweeted Oprah.

Data collected by YouTube show the video is most popular with boys and girls ages 13 to 17, as well as young men ages 18 to 24.

Invisible Children’s critics say the San Diego-based group oversimplifies a complex issue. In a rebuttal posted on its website, the group acknowledges the video overlooks many nuances but says it sought to explain the conflict “in an easily understandable format.” It called the film a “first entry point.”

“It’s something we can all agree



In this Nov. 12, 2006 file photo the leader of the Lord’s Resistance Army, Joseph Kony, left, and his deputy Vincent Otti sit inside a tent at Ri-Kwamba in Southern Sudan.

## Dad-son talk, celebrity tweets key to viral video

By JASON STRAZIUSO and RODNEY MUHUMUZA

Associated Press

on regardless of your political background,” said Ben Keesey, the group’s 28-year-old chief executive officer. “There are few times where problems are black and white. There’s lots of complicated stuff in the world, but Joseph Kony and what he’s doing is black and white.”

The LRA began its attacks in Uganda in the 1980s, when Kony sought to overthrow the government. Since being pushed out of Uganda several years ago, the militia has terrorized villages in Congo, the Central Africa Republic and South Sudan.

“Kony is a monster. He deserves to be prosecuted and hanged,” Col. Felix Kulayigye, spokesman for Uganda’s military, told The Associated Press.

Because of the intensified hunt for Kony, LRA forces—once thousands strong—have diminished in number, splitting into smaller groups that can travel the jungle more easily. Experts estimate the militia now has about 250 fighters.

Attacks continue, with victims mutilated by machetes, their faces slashed into grotesque shapes. Women are raped and killed. Young girls are forced into sexual slavery.

Jolly Okot was abducted in 1986. The then-18-year-old could speak English, so she was valuable to the militants, who also forced her into sex slavery.

Today, Okot is the Uganda country

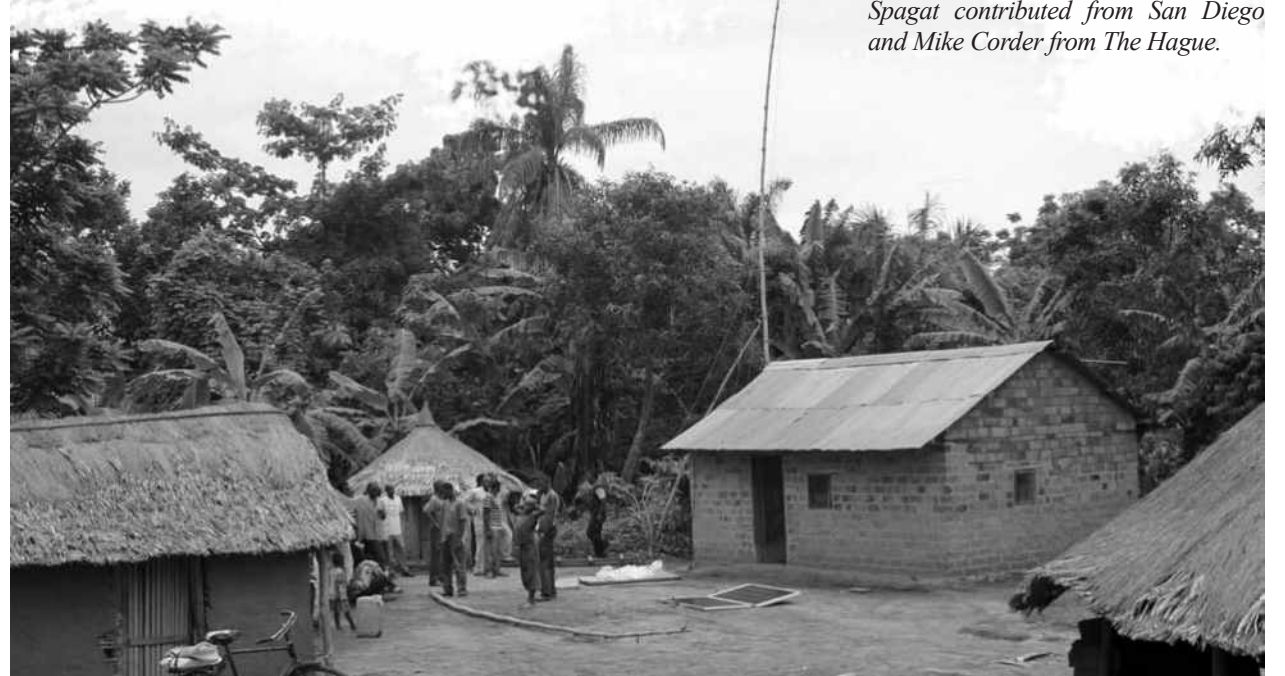
director for Invisible Children. She said the group is helping 800 people affected by LRA violence to attend high school and college. The program has given hope to kids who previously dropped out of school.

“The most exciting thing about this film is that I’m so grateful that the world has been able to pay attention to an issue that has long been neglected,” she said. “I think it is an eye-opener and I think this will push for Joseph Kony

to be apprehended, and I think justice will get to him.”

Moreno-Ocampo said it has been hard to raise public awareness about Kony since issuing the arrest warrant against him in 2005.

“Kony is difficult. He is not killing people in Paris or in New York. Kony is killing people in Central African Republic, no one cares about him,” Moreno-Ocampo told the AP. “These



In this Saturday, July 9, 2011 file photo released by Invisible Children, the antenna installation of one of Invisible Children’s 14 high frequency radios used in their Early Warning Radio Network to help track the Lord’s Resistance Army is seen in Haut Uele, Congo.

young people from California mobilizing this effort is incredible, exactly what we need.”

Still, the burst of attention has brought scrutiny, including over the ratio of Invisible Children’s spending on aid and its rating by the site Charity Navigator, as well as criticism of a 2008 photo of three members holding guns alongside troops in what is now South Sudan.

In a response posted on the Internet, the group said it spends about 80 percent of its funds on programs that further its mission, 16 percent on administration and about 3 percent on fundraising. The group said its accountability score is low because it has only four independent voting members on its board of directors, but is seeking a fifth.

The group’s website [www.kony2012.com](http://www.kony2012.com) prominently displays the faces of 20 celebrities—from Warren Buffett and Bill O’Reilly to Tim Tebow and Stephen Colbert—asking viewers to click on them to send a message urging support. It also shows 12 politicians from across the ideological spectrum.

In the video, Russell tells of meeting a Ugandan boy named Jacob who watched LRA fighters kill his brother. The American promises the African child he will do whatever he can to help. Nearly a decade later, Jacob is part of Invisible Children’s campaign to bring awareness of the atrocities to college campuses in America.

The film opens with Gavin’s birth, and Russell’s message that in today’s interconnected world, “where you live should not determine whether you live.” If Gavin, born in America, can have a happy upbringing, Jacob should too.

“At the end of my life I want to say that the world we left behind is one Gavin can be proud of, one that doesn’t allow Joseph Kony and child soldiers,” Russell says. “A place where children no matter where they live, have a childhood free from fear.”

Gavin shakes his blond hair and says: “I’m going to be like you dad. I’m going to come with you to Africa.”

*Straziuso reported from Nairobi, Kenya. Associated Press reporters Elliot Spagat contributed from San Diego and Mike Corder from The Hague.*



## Overdrive

## 2012 Honda Pilot is an unobtrusive helpmeet

By LARRY PRINTZ  
THE VIRGINIAN-PILOT

The 2012 Honda Pilot has established itself as a four-wheeled family servant, playing the part of a minivan for those who wouldn't be caught dead driving a minivan. This SUV is a family truckster that's better suited for the pokey parkway than the Rubicon trail.

In the decade since the Pilot was introduced, it has gained a mere 10 horsepower, and just under 60 pounds, while retaining its five-speed automatic gearbox. So you'd expect the new model to retain the sporty flair previous ones possessed.

OK, it doesn't.

But Pilot buyers do not crave athletic handling or adventurous styling. They need an able-bodied vehicle at their beck and call. And like household help, the Pilot does its best to stand by, but not stand out.

The bulbous styling that debuted for 2008 gets tweaked with a handsome new three-bar grille and revised front fascia, all aimed at reducing wind resistance and improving fuel economy. It also looks more like a Honda and less like a design student's rejected senior class project.

The makeover continues in-



The 2012 Honda Pilot crossover SUV is a family truckster that's better suited for the pokey parkway than the trail.

side, where the Pilot's instrument panel gets a redo. Honda says that this results in a more intuitive button layout. In practice, there appear to be too many buttons. What's worse, some of the instrument panel's pieces were misaligned. And there's a bit too much hard plastic. Well, at least it's durable.

Aesthetics may no longer be Honda's strong suit, but the Pilot does get the basics right and that's where it really shines.

You can see it in a number of small touches throughout the cabin, from the generously sized cupholders to the front seat center console and many niches that are perfectly sized for hold-

ing many different items.

The front and second rows are comfortable and spacious; the third row is best suited for children. Or fold that seat and enjoy the storage space. Cargo space is rating at 18 cubic feet with all seats raised, but most of the space is vertical. Thoughtfully, there is an additional 2.8 cubic feet under the cargo floor.

The Pilot is available in four ascending trim levels: LX, EX, EX-L and Touring. Mainly, the difference between models comes down to how hedonistic you are. You need more coddling? EX-L and Touring are for you. Can you live with less? Opt

for the LX. Looking for a good balance between coddling and value? Try the EX.

Of course, Honda sent a four-wheel-drive Touring model, which means it was stuffed with features.

Nice? You bet.

The Touring has an upgraded navigation system with higher resolution screen, a rearview camera that displays one of three modes: normal, wide and overhead. It also has a 10-speaker premium audio

## NUTS &amp; BOLTS

2012 Honda Pilot:

- Engine: 3.5-liter
- Wheelbase: 109.2 inches
- Length: 191.4 inches
- Weight: 4,497 pounds
- Cargo space: 18-87 cubic feet
- Towing capacity: 2,500-4,500 pounds
- EPA rating (city/highway): 17/24 mpg
- Fuel consumption: 20 mpg
- Fuel type: Regular
- Base price, base model (excluding destination charge): \$28,470
- Base price, test model: \$40,820
- As tested: \$41,630

improve its fuel economy for 2012, with EPA ratings of 18 mpg city, 25 mpg highway with front-wheel-drive. Subtract 1 mpg for all-wheel drive. That makes the Pilot fairly fuel-efficient for its size.

Honda says that it made the Pilot quieter this year, although road and tire noise still seem intrusive. Handling is perfectly fine, but you would be hard-pressed to call it fun. The ride is very comfortable, although the Pilot feels bigger and heavier than it actually is.

Still, this car's beauty is in the way it serves its owners, not in flashy handling or grand prix dreams, but graceful space and conservative looks. Its updates are evolutionary, not revolutionary.

The Pilot's service is so ably unobtrusive, you may be tempted to name it Jeeves.

Larry Printz is automotive editor at The Virginian-Pilot in Norfolk, Va. He can be reached at [larry.printz@pilotonline.com](mailto:larry.printz@pilotonline.com).

## UNDER THE HOOD

## Finicky fueler might be under warranty

By BRAD BERGHOLDT  
MCCATCHY-TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

**QUESTION: I have a 2005 Chrysler Town & Country van that has been a problem to fill the gas tank at the last two fill-ups. No matter how I hold the nozzle or how many times I reseal it in the filler tube, it just won't continue to pump, and shuts off as if the tank was full. So I can fill the tank, but takes a very long time, and I'm still not sure when it really is full.**

**Searching online, it looks like others have found problems with the carbon canister or the solenoid valve. Some claim it is the roll-over valve in the tank. Once resource tells me to replace the filler tube, at about \$130. Many have paid "the experts" \$400 to \$800 and still have the same problem.**

**How can I diagnose and repair the problem with pressure in the tank?—Jim Cauble**

**ANSWER:** Jim, your refueling difficulty is likely caused by the Town and Country's onboard refueling vapor recovery system, or ORVR—a well-intended but sometimes buggy attempt to reduce escaping fuel vapor when you gas up. ORVR, required on all passenger cars built since model year

2000, utilizes clever gizmos in and near the fuel tank to retain vapor displaced by incoming liquid and direct it to your evaporative canister, rather than escape from the filler neck. The stored vapor is later consumed by the engine using a process known as purging.

I performed a technical service bulletin search and also checked Identifix, an auto-repair database, to see who has had success fixing symptoms like yours on similar vehicles. In 2009, Chrysler issued a revised service bulletin (14-001-09 REV) addressing your exact symptoms. A diagnostic procedure is listed to determine if the fault lies in the fuel tank's internal valves, various hoses and tubes, check valves and liquid separator, the vapor canister, or a few other gadgets. The bulletin suggests the fuel tank is the least likely cause of the problem.

According to Identifix, the most common post-warranty fix listed by participating repair techs for this situation is replacement of the fuel tank. This isn't a pleasant option—the cost of the tank, if the van is equipped with stow-and-go seats, is close to \$1,000. I'd want to be darned sure of the diagnosis before taking that road.

In a follow-up message, you

confirmed the January 2005 build date, the California emissions certification found on the under-hood emissions label, and the odometer reading of 59,000 miles. That possibly places this issue within the California-mandated emissions warranty for 7 years, 70,000 miles on expensive parts—and the fuel tank is listed. Other emissions parts are warranted for 3 years, 50,000 miles.

You'll need to find documentation of a placed-in-service date after March 2005 and get the van into a Chrysler dealer ASAP for diagnosis. If the fault lies with a part other than the tank, you'll be beyond the short-term warranty for those items, but fortunately their cost is fairly reasonable.

With the documented problems with this system, I wonder if Chrysler could be persuaded to step up to an out-of-warranty policy adjustment? On federally certified vehicles, the emissions warranty is 2 years, 24,000 miles, or 8 years, 80,000 miles for certain expensive parts.

Brad Bergholdt is an automotive technology instructor at Evergreen Valley College in San Jose, Calif. Readers may send him email at [under-the-hood@earthlink.net](mailto:under-the-hood@earthlink.net); he cannot make personal replies.

## Go low as possible with gas octane

By PAUL BRAND  
STAR TRIBUNE (MINNEAPOLIS)

**QUESTION: A car dealership told me to use only the recommended octane fuel for my vehicle. They said that using a higher octane level actually had a negative effect on the performance because the engine could not fire at its optimum level. My 2005 Mercury Montego can use regular 87 octane, but when I use a midrange 89 octane I get better performance and better mileage. What is the truth? Is there a break-even point to using higher-octane gasoline if it is beneficial?**

**ANSWER:** The rule of thumb is to use the lowest-octane gasoline that will operate the engine efficiently. For the vast majority of modern cars and trucks, that means regular unleaded, which is typically 87 octane. The octane rating of gasoline is a measure of the fuel's resistance to ignition, meaning the higher the octane rating, more heat and pressure are required to "start the fire." If the recommended octane gasoline provides proper starting, power, drivability and efficiency, there's no benefit to using higher-octane fuel.

What engines might benefit from higher octane? Engines designed and built for higher

performance, featuring higher compression ratios or turbochargers and more aggressive fuel and ignition mapping. These engines will produce less power, mileage and efficiency when operated on lower-octane gasoline because the engine management system reduces the combustion temperatures by richening the fuel-air mixture or reducing ignition timing.

You'll have to be the judge of whether 89 octane gasoline provides more performance and mileage to offset its higher cost. It could, but in most cases won't.

In my case, using midrange 89 octane in our turbocharged VW engine provides good power, mileage and drivability—even though the manufacturer recommends premium. Pay your money and take your choice.

**Q: My 2002 Mercedes has a garage door opener built into the rearview mirror with three buttons that will open three different garage doors. The first button has failed, and Mercedes says a new one costs around \$1,200. Can it be fixed, or can I use one of the other buttons to open my garage door?**

**A:** If only the first button has failed, just program one of the other two buttons to open your garage door. If the entire system has failed, use an old-fash-

ioned remote-control opener and clip it to the visor.

**Q: I have a 1940 Cadillac LaSalle that needs an electric fuel pump to help with starting and to prevent vapor lock. The mechanical pump must drain back or be too slow to start the car sometimes. Can you tell me how to plumb it so I can turn the electric pump off after starting? Someone said I need to run a line parallel to the old line and install check valves.**

**A:** I suspect the higher volatility of today's gasoline might be part of the problem. The simplest answer is to completely bypass the mechanical fuel pump by installing a low-pressure electric pump at the rear of the vehicle near the fuel tank. Adding a fuel-pressure regulator under the hood would allow you to fine-tune fuel pressure for the carburetor on your wonderful old Cadillac.

Paul Brand, author of *How to Repair Your Car*, is an automotive troubleshooter, driving instructor and former race-car driver. Readers may write to him at: Star Tribune, 425 Portland Ave. S., Minneapolis, Minn. 55488 or via email at [paulbrand@startribune.com](mailto:paulbrand@startribune.com). Please explain the problem in detail and include a daytime phone number. It isn't always possible to send a personal reply.



## Life & Style

# Doghouse designed by Wright rebuilt for film

By **SUDHIN THANAWALA**  
ASSOCIATED PRESS

**SAN FRANCISCO (AP)**—The Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum in New York City. The Fallingwater home in southwestern Pennsylvania. But a child's doghouse?

Frank Lloyd Wright designed hundreds of landmark buildings and homes during a prolific career that spanned more than seven decades. But in what is widely considered a first and only for the famed architect, Wright indulged a young boy's humble request for a dog house in 1956 and sent him designs for the structure.

"I was probably his youngest client and poorest client," Jim Berger, now 68, said during a recent phone interview.

Berger rebuilt the doghouse last year with his brother, using the original plans. It was featured in a documentary film and will be displayed during screenings starting this month.

Wright designed Berger's family's home in the Marin County town of San Anselmo,

prompting the then-12 years old Berger to ask his dad if Wright would design a home for his black Labrador, Eddie.

Berger's dad said he didn't know, so Berger decided to write to the great architect himself.

"I would appreciate it if you would design me a doghouse, which would be easy to build, but would go with our house ...," read the letter dated June 19, 1956. "(My dog) is two and a half feet (0.75 meters) high and three feet (0.9 meters) long. The reasons I would like this doghouse is for the winters mainly."

Berger explained that he would pay Wright from the money he made from his paper route.

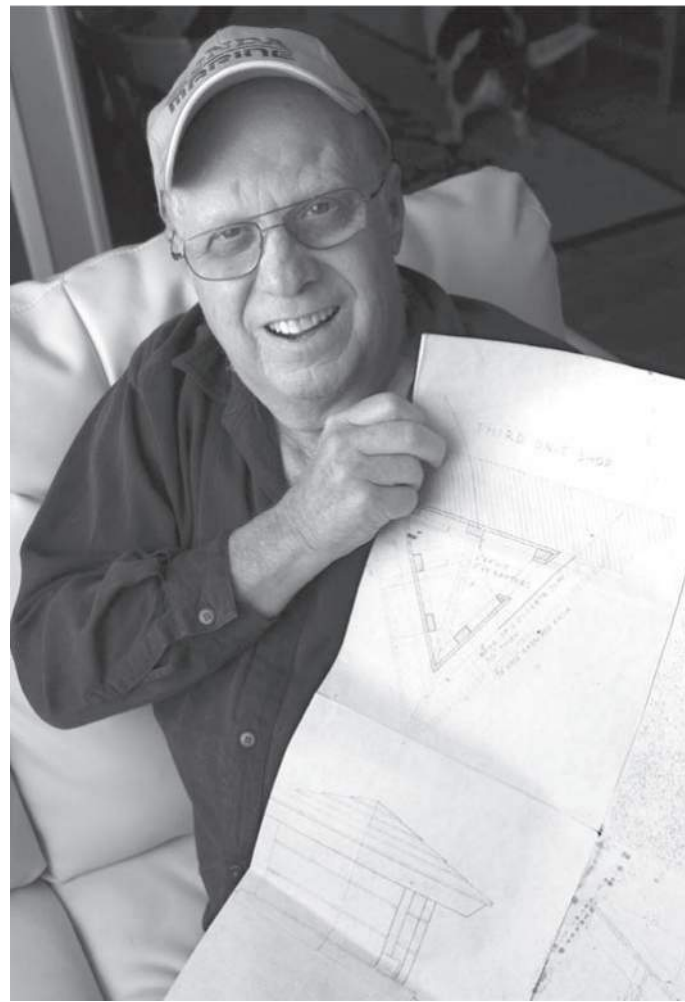
"A house for Eddie is an op-

portunity," Wright wrote back. But he said he was too busy at the time (construction on the Guggenheim began in 1956) and asked that Berger write him back in November.

Berger did so on the first of the month, and the plan for the doghouse followed—at no charge.

"The story of a 12-year-old kid having the chutzpah to write a letter to the greatest architect of all time and having him design something as modest as a doghouse ... I just knew it was a great story," said Michael Miner, who produced and directed the documentary, "Romanza," which features the doghouse and other structures Wright designed in California.

The Dallas, Texas, filmmaker is scheduled to screen the docu-



AP  
In this photo taken Friday, March 9, 2012, Jim Berger displays the plans for a doghouse that architect Frank Lloyd Wright designed for him, in his Orangevale, Calif. home.

mentary at the Illinois State Museum in Springfield, Illinois, on March 25, according to his website, designedbyfranklloydwright.com. Screenings are scheduled to follow in Iowa, Georgia, Florida, New Jersey and New Hampshire. The doghouse will be on hand.

Berger said the original doghouse was not built until about

10 years after he received the designs. Since Eddie had died by then, Berger's father and brother built their house for another family dog.

That doghouse, however, later ended up in the dump because Berger said his mother did not have a dog, and did not see much other value in it. He rebuilt it for the documentary

last year, working off Wright's original plan, which said, "Plan of Eddie's house."

"When I wrote him originally to design the doghouse, I specified that it be real easy to build," said Berger, who became a cabinet maker. "It was a nightmare."

The roughly 3-feet wide-by-5-feet long-by-3-feet high (0.9-meter wide-by-1.5-meter long-by-0.9-feet high) doghouse has a sharp triangular shape, with a sloping shingled roof. It is made of Philippine mahogany and weighs about 250 pounds (113 kilograms).

"It's definitely in the master's hand," Oskar Munoz, assistant director of archives at the Frank Lloyd Wright Foundation, said of the design for the doghouse.

Munoz said Berger's is believed to be the only doghouse Wright designed. Wright likely sketched it out and then handed it to a draftsman in his studio who turned it into a working drawing, he said.

Wright was past 80 and likely busy with dozens of projects at the time, Munoz said, so for him to take the time to make the sketch was unusual. Wright died in Phoenix in 1959.

Berger, who now lives in the Sacramento area and has three rescue beagles, said he's not sure what he will do with the doghouse.

Although his beagles are worthy of it, he said they would probably prefer to stay in the house.

"My feeling is that I'd like it to go to a museum because it is a historical monument," he said.

## Big life events shift Wanda Sykes' comic focus

By **KEVIN C. JOHNSON**  
ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH

**ST. LOUIS**—Wanda Sykes fans should see something different from the comedian on her current tour.

Much has happened in her life the past few years. She came out as a lesbian in 2008, got married, and her wife gave birth to twins in 2009. And last year, she was diagnosed with breast cancer and had a double mastectomy.

All of that changed her focus.

"I came from this total independent woman running around doing her own thing to now being in this world, trying to balance the career, kids, being married and all," she says. "It's nuts."

"Right before the kids, I had just remodeled the house. ... Now with the kids, it's like hiring an interior decorator to come in and (screw) up your house, 'Oh, we need crayon on this now.'"



Sykes

She says that with all of the changes in her life, her shows are more relatable.

"Now that I have kids and everything, they just take over your life. It's a game changer. Before, I used to be very political and knew what was going on. Now with the kids, I know

more about what's going on with 'Sesame Street' than Wall Street."

Sykes says her life is providing more natural comic fodder, from having white babies to having a French wife.

"We got everything going on here, and it's funny," she says. "I've said I didn't like 'The Help.' It was hard for me to cook fried chicken for my white babies after that movie. It was too close to home."

Her battle against breast cancer also found its way into her show.

"I'm good, healthy, back at work, and I do talk about it in the show," she says. "I think it's important for women to see

it's not the end, and that it's important to catch it early."

Fans looking for a more political or socially conscious Sykes will still get that. She'll talk about unemployment, the economy and "this mess they're calling the GOP candidates."

Sykes, whose tour is taking her worldwide, is weighing what to do next. She's one of the voices in an upcoming "Ice Age" sequel, and she's shooting a movie in New Orleans. One thing she says she won't do is another network television show; "The Wanda Sykes Show" chat fest lasted for only one season on Fox.

"It was rough," she says of the TV show. "I was still doing '(The New Adventures of Old) Christine', and when you do a show like that (the talk show) you have to be there 100 percent, full time. It was really hard going back and forth. I had fun doing it, and I thought it was a good show."

"But I can't mess with networks anymore. I'm done with the networks. I like cable. They give you a shot."

## Elizabeth Olsen talks about 'Silent House'

By **RENE RODRIGUEZ**  
MCCLATCHY NEWSPAPERS

**MIAMI**—After filming wrapped on her debut feature "Martha Marcy May Marlene," the intense psychological drama in which Elizabeth Olsen played a mentally-disturbed fugitive from a bizarre cult, the actress could have opted for a little R&R to recoup. Instead, three weeks later, Olsen jumped into her next starring role as Sarah, the distraught heroine of "Silent House," about a young woman trapped inside a creepy mansion where strange things are afoot.

"I was just thankful that someone was offering me another movie," says Olsen, who turned 23 in February. "But it turned out to be a lot harder than I expected. It's very difficult to create a character arc and not repeat any beats in a movie where things just keep getting worse and worse for an hour and a half."

Like the 2010 Uruguayan chiller that inspired it, "Silent House" unfolds in real time and seems to have been filmed in one single uninterrupted take. But Olsen confides the movie is



AP  
In this film image released by Open Road Films, Elizabeth Olsen is shown in a scene from "Silent House."

actually comprised of 13 shots, cleverly edited together so you can't see the seams.

"The hardest one of all the takes was the seventh," she says. "It starts with me running up from the basement, out of the house, down the street, into a car and then back into the house. It took us several days to get that one right."

Olsen has already completed three more films due for release in 2012, appearing opposite the likes of Robert DeNiro, Zac Efron and Jane Fonda. At the end of March, she begins work

on "Kill Your Darlings," the story of a murder that involved Beat generation poets Allen Ginsberg, Jack Kerouac and William Burroughs.

"I play Edie Parker, and even though I'm in only four scenes, I've been doing so much research on her that I feel like we're making her autobiography," Olsen says. "The script by John Krokidas is just incredible, and the cast (which includes Daniel Radcliffe, Ben Foster, Jack Huston and Michael C. Hall) is just incredible. It's going to be a really cool film."



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**John Carter**

Friday		4:05	7:05	9:45
Saturday	1:05	4:05	7:05	9:45
Sunday	1:05	4:05	7:05	
Monday thru Thursday		4:05	7:05	

Taylor Kitsch, Lynn Collins  
Fantasy, Science fiction • Rated PG 13

#### Synopsis

WALL-E's Andrew Stanton steps out from the world of animation into live-action with this adaptation of the Edgar Rice Burroughs character. Taylor Kitsch stars as John Carter, a Civil War soldier who finds himself magically teleported to the planet Mars, with fellow Wolverine star Lynn Collins joining him as love interest Dejah Thoris.

**Silent House**

Friday		4:30	7:30	9:50
Saturday	1:30	4:30	7:30	9:50
Sunday	1:30	4:30	7:30	
Monday thru Thursday		4:30	7:30	

Elizabeth Olsen, Adam Trese  
Thriller • Rated R

#### Synopsis

Chris Kentis and Laura Lau (Open Water) return to terra firma for this remake of the "real time" Uruguayan thriller La Casa Muda. Their summer cottage vandalized by squatters during the off-season, Sarah (Elizabeth Olsen), her father, and her uncle begin the laborious process of cleaning the place up when noises from within hint they are not alone. Now the deeper Sarah ventures into the derelict building, the further the secrets of her dark past are dragged out into the light. As with La Casa Muda, Silent House was shot in one continuous take, a production style that allows the viewer to experience the swelling tension of Sarah's horror firsthand as she unlocks a diabolical mystery.

**Dr. Seuss' The Lorax**

Friday		4:10	7:10	9:30
Saturday	1:10	4:10	7:10	9:30
Sunday	1:10	4:10	7:10	
Monday thru Thursday		4:10	7:10	

Zac Efron, Taylor Swift  
Children's/Family • Rated PG

**Project X**

Friday		4:20	7:20	9:35
Saturday	1:20	4:20	7:20	9:35
Sunday	1:20	4:20	7:20	
Monday thru Thursday		4:20	7:20	

Thomas Mann, Jonathan Brown  
Comedy • Rated R

**Act of Valor**

Friday		4:00	7:00	10:00
Saturday	1:00	4:00	7:00	10:00
Sunday	1:00	4:00	7:00	
Monday thru Thursday		4:00	7:00	

Emilio Rivera, Roselyn Sanchez  
Adventure, Action • Rated R

**This Means War**

Friday		4:25	7:25	9:40
Saturday	1:25	4:25	7:25	9:40
Sunday	1:25	4:25	7:25	
Monday thru Thursday		4:25	7:25	

Reese Witherspoon, Chris Pine  
Comedy • Rated PG 13

**Journey2: Mysterious Island**

Friday		4:15	7:15	9:55
Saturday	1:15	4:15	7:15	9:55
Sunday	1:15	4:15	7:15	
Monday thru Thursday		4:15	7:15	

The Rock, Venessa Hudgens, Michael Caine  
Adventure • Rated PG

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# 10 prolific TV talents, seemingly everywhere

By ELLEN GRAY  
PHILADELPHIA DAILY NEWS

We're not saying these are the 10 busiest people on television—last we heard, Dr. Mehmet Oz ("Dr. Oz") was still cracking open people's chests—but in an age of high unemployment, all these people are highly employed:

## ■ RYAN SEACREST

**What he's up to on air:** Regular hosting duties include Fox's "American Idol," which made him a household name; a nationally syndicated radio show, "On Air with Ryan Seacrest"; and "E! News."

**Behind the scenes:** One of cable's most prolific producers, Seacrest, 37, is one of the people responsible for "Keeping Up with the Kardashians" (and its various demon offspring). His company's latest show, "Shahs of Sunset," about young Persian Americans in Los Angeles, premieres at 10 p.m. Sunday on Bravo.

**Hot property:** With his "Idol" contract up for renewal this year, both Fox and Comcast-owned NBC Universal (which includes E!) are eager to keep him in their respective families. He's been mentioned as a possible replacement for Matt Lauer on NBC's "Today" show, should Comcast not back up the truck to keep Lauer, but NBC's programming chief, Bob Greenblatt, has also said he'd be interested if Seacrest wanted to do "interview specials à la Barbara Walters."

## ■ CHELSEA HANDLER

**What she's up to on air:** Host of E! late-night talk show "Chelsea Lately," the 37-year-old comedian also plays herself on its mockumentary companion series "After Lately" and appears on NBC's sitcom, "Are You There, Chelsea?" playing her own older sister.

**Behind the scenes:** She's the boss. She's also written several best-sellers—including "Are You There, Vodka? It's Me, Chelsea," which inspired the NBC show—and now has her own publishing imprint.

**Not finished just yet:** Though she says "less is more" and "I'm good" for now, Handler can envision a future where she might get more than six minutes to interview a guest, including perhaps some of those specials NBC's talked of for her E! colleague Seacrest. "But I'm not going to compete with Ryan, since he's my sister," she joked recently. "He's got seniority over me."

## ■ TIM GUNN

**What he's up to on air:** Longtime mentor on Lifetime's "Project Runway," he recently added a five-day-a-week gig at ABC, where he's one of the co-hosts of its daytime show "The Revolution."

**Behind the scenes:** Gunn, who was the fashion design chair at Parsons The New School for Design until 2007, is now the chief creative officer for Liz Claiborne. He's also written three books, including a 2011

memoir, "Shaken, Not Stirred."

**Late bloomer:** When "Project Runway" came along, said the 58-year-old Gunn, "I was thinking about that cabin in the woods. All this happened to me after I turned 50. How remarkable is that?"

## ■ NIECY NASH

**What she's up to on air:** Nash, who's been both a "reality" star ("Clean House") and actress ("Reno 911!") is still playing both sides of the street, with a TLC "docu-sitcom" about her newly blended family, "Leave It to Niecy," premiering March 25, and "Have Faith," a TV Land sitcom spin-off of "Hot in Cleveland," coming in June, in which she'll be the wife of a preacher played by Cedric the Entertainer.

**If that's not enough:** She has a web series on Yahoo, "Let's Talk About Love," "about love and relationships," she said. "And then I have my HSN deal, which is launching in April," and she's writing a book. "And I'm a new wife. That's another job!" Along with her own three children, she now has a stepson.

**What she says to "Clean House" fans who still want her to de-clutter their homes:** "I'm not doing that show now, but I never say never (about returning). Because I really do like helping people."

## ■ ANDERSON COOPER

**What he's up to on air:** Hosts a nightly show, "Anderson Cooper 360" (8 p.m., CNN) as well as a syndicated daytime show, "Anderson." He's also a contributor to CBS' "60 Minutes."

**Offscreen:** The 44-year-old Cooper, who's never minded crossing the supposed line between news and entertainment—he used to host ABC's "The Mole"—can be heard as the (prerecorded) voice of the narrator in Broadway's latest production of "How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying," a gig held by Walter Cronkite in a previous revival of the show. Oh, and like most journalists, he has a blog: <http://ac360.blogs.cnn.com>.

## ■ TINA FEY

**What she's up to on-screen:** The "Saturday Night Live" veteran stars in NBC's "30 Rock" and in the occasional movie ("Date Night"). You can check out her Sarah Palin impression one more time on Saturday in clips shown during HBO's "Game Change," in which Julianne Moore plays the former vice presidential candidate. And then there's her latest gig, pushing hair color for Garnier Nutrisse.

**Offscreen:** Creator and executive producer of "30 Rock"—which means the 41-year-old Fey is boss to both Tracy Morgan and Alec Baldwin—she's also a best-selling author. Gave birth in August to the second of her two daughters.

## ■ ANDY COHEN

**What he's up to on-screen:** Hosts Bravo's late-night show "Watch What Happens: Live," which recently expanded to five

days a week, Sunday through Thursday.

**Didn't quit his day job:** As executive vice president of development for Bravo, the 43-year-old Cohen is the suit in charge of, among other things, "The Real Housewives" franchise.

**On how he keeps up his energy:** "I'm very passionate about what I do and I love what I do. And I try to work out five days a week."

## ■ WHITNEY CUMMINGS

**On-screen:** Stars in NBC's "Whitney." **Behind the scenes:** The 29-year-old University of Pennsylvania grad, actress and comedian created two of this season's new sitcoms, "Whitney" and CBS' "2 Broke Girls" (with "Sex and the City" writer Michael Patrick King).

**So she's highly employed?:** "I'm highly tired, yes."

**How she's juggling shows on two different networks:** "I still read scripts (for '2 Broke Girls') and, you know, pitch whenever I can, but the majority of my time is obviously spent on my NBC show, since I'm in it. But Michael Patrick King is the best at this, at writing for girls and running a TV show about women and their sex lives and stuff, so it's in very good hands. I miss it every day."

## ■ CHARLIE ROSE

**What he's up to on-screen:** Co-host of the new "CBS This Morning," he's still hosting his long-running PBS late-night show, "The Charlie Rose Show" (check local listings) as well as occasional "Person to Person" specials for CBS.

**Why, at 70, did he add a morning show to his schedule?:** "I'm a morning person. ... Morning television sets the agenda in a way."

**A couple of things he thinks viewers might not realize:** "No. 1, I'm an early riser, as I have been, and a year ago I got up at 5 o'clock in the morning every morning, between 5 and 6. I continue to do that. No. 2, my program on PBS is shot at 5 o'clock. It's not live at 11 o'clock."

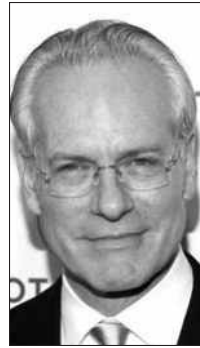
**Not to worry:** "I would not have done this if I had any reason to believe it wasn't doable and any reason that it would affect the hundred years that I expect to live," Rose told reporters in January.

## ■ JOAN RIVERS

**What she's up to on-screen:** Co-stars with her daughter in the WEtv show "Joan & Melissa: Joan Knows Best?" The pair are also co-hosts on E!'s "Fashion Police."

**Offscreen:** Rivers, 78 and still going strong—and, yes, still going under the knife periodically—continues to work regularly as a standup comic.

**Someone tell the Brits:** She's touring the United Kingdom later this year.





# 'Lorax' trumps 'John Carter' with \$39.1M weekend



AP  
American actor Zac Efron poses during the photocall of the movie "Dr. Seuss' The Lorax" in Rome's, Friday, March 9, 2012. Efron gives his voice to the character Ted.

LOS ANGELES (AP)— "Dr. Seuss' the Lorax" has easily beaten Edgar Rice Burroughs' "John Carter" at the weekend box office.

Studio estimates Sunday put Universal Pictures' "The Lorax" at No. 1 for the second-straight weekend as the animated adventure based on the children's book took in \$39.1 million. That raised its 10-day domestic total to \$122 million, making "The Lorax" the top-grossing movie released this year.

"John Carter," based on "Tarzan" creator Burroughs' tales of the interplanetary adventurer, opened in second-place with \$30.6 million. That's an awful start given the whopping \$250 million that Disney reportedly spent to make "John Carter," which also earned generally poor reviews that will hurt its long-term prospects.

The movie's salvation could come overseas, where "John Carter" opened in 55 markets with \$70.6 million, giving it a worldwide total of \$101.2 million.

The Warner Bros. teen comedy "Project X" held up well in its second weekend with \$11.6 million to finish at No. 3 and raise its domestic haul to \$40.1 million.

1. "Dr. Seuss' the Lorax," \$39.1 million (\$1.4 million international).
2. "John Carter," \$30.6 million (\$70.6 million international).
3. "Project X," \$11.6 million (\$3 million international).
4. "Silent House," \$7.01 million.
5. "Act of Valor," \$7 million.
6. "A Thousand Words," \$6.4 million.
7. "Safe House," \$5 million (\$6.1 million international).
8. "The Vow," \$4 million (\$2.4 million international).
9. "This Means War," \$3.8 million (\$9.4 million international).
10. "Journey 2: The Mysterious Island," \$3.7 million (\$9.2 million international).

Elizabeth Olsen's horror tale "Silent House," released by Open Road Films, opened modestly at No. 4 with \$7 million. Olsen plays a young woman terrorized inside her family's spooky summer home.

Eddie Murphy's comedy "A Thousand Words," a leftover shot in 2008 and finally dumped into theaters by distributor Paramount, was a dud at No. 6 with just \$6.4 million.



AP  
In this Feb. 12, 2011 file photo, singer Whitney Houston, left, and her daughter Bobbi Kristina arrive at the Pre-Grammy Gala & Salute to Industry Icons with Clive Davis honoring David Geffen in Beverly Hills, Calif.

## Whitney Houston's daughter: 'She's always with me'

NEW YORK (AP)—Whitney Houston's daughter says she's doing "as good as I possibly can" in her first interview since her mother died last month.

Bobbi Kristina Brown made the comments in a Sunday interview with Oprah Winfrey on Winfrey's network, OWN. The 19-year-old said she still hears her mother's voice and feels her spirit: "I feel her passing through me all the time."

She described her mother as

her best friend, her sister, her confidant—"my everything."

The night before Houston died, Brown says she asked her mother to lay down with her. They spent the night together, and much of the next day.

Brown, whose father is singer Bobby Brown, says she plans to continue in her mother's entertaining footsteps by singing, acting and dancing.

Houston died on Feb. 11.

## Consider the consequences for marriage name change

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN

FROM UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

DEAR ABBY: Like "Standing My Ground in New Jersey" (Jan. 9), I had decided at a young age I had no interest in changing my last name if I were ever to be married. For me, the decision had nothing to do with an established career or a fear of losing myself. I simply never saw the point.



Dear Abby

Would you believe that I fell in love with and married a man who asked me how I felt about him taking MY last name? When he first mentioned the idea, I told him that he should think it through because a name change shouldn't be taken lightly. Like "Standing," my husband also had no father figure. He's happy to now have a last name that finally "means something" to him.

ERIN IN EL CAJON, CALIF.

DEAR ERIN: That column produced a wide variety of responses from both men and women. However, most of my readers agree that "Standing" and her fiancé have an important decision to make, and they should both step back and examine the options together. Their comments:

■ ■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: Most women around the world retain their names after marriage, and children take their mother's name as their middle name and their father's name as their last. It's only in English-speaking countries that the tradition exists for women to take their husband's last name. It originated from the time when wives were considered property.

JANE IN FRANKLIN, TENN.

■ ■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: The decision to keep or change one's name is a personal one. In my experience as a judge, I often see women ask for their maiden name to be restored to them upon a divorce. I also saw one case in which the husband in the divorce requested that his former name be restored to him. That couple had used the wife's name as their family name when they married.

I agree with your response to postpone the decision until both of them have discussed the issue more fully. How they handle this decision will foretell how they will handle other decisions in the future.

JUDGE TONYA IN FLORIDA

■ ■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: By "Standing" not changing her name, which is the cultural norm in this country, she will create years of confusion, hassle, constant explanations and identity issues for her, her husband and her future children. Her husband will also feel a sense of disconnect that is hard for her to understand.

PATRICIA IN THE SOUTHWEST

■ ■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: "Standing" seems to miss the primary point about entering into a marriage. It's not about standing your ground; it's about meeting in the middle ground. Not once in her letter did she make a reference to the fact that what she and her fiancé are doing is forming a new family of their own. I kept my maiden name and hyphenated it, but was proud that my husband, children and I ALL created the "Smith" family.

SUSAN IN PORTLAND, MAINE

■ ■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: I was happy to change my name when I married the first time because I had little connection to my father's family. As the marriage progressed, I felt a loss of personal identity. After the divorce, I adopted my grandfather's name. Abby, the name change was also life-changing. I gained an identity and a legacy to continue. I think the name issue is as much about the insecurity of the man as the independence of the woman.

DR. BETH IN GRANBURY, TEXAS

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at [www.DearAbby.com](http://www.DearAbby.com) or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

Abby shares more than 100 of her favorite recipes in two booklets: "Abby's Favorite Recipes" and "More Favorite Recipes by Dear Abby." Send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for \$14 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby, Cookbooklet Set, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Shipping and handling are included in the price.)

## Jury will soon offer finale in 'Housewives' trial

LOS ANGELES (AP)—For eight seasons, Marc Cherry has woven conflict, mystery and death into the story lines of ABC's "Desperate Housewives," but soon 12 jurors will be the ones supplying suspense for the veteran television writer.

Deliberations in actress Nicollette Sheridan's wrongful termination lawsuit begin this week, with the panel deciding



Sheridan

whether they believe the actress was fired after complaining Cherry, the series' creator and show-runner, struck her on the set. He denies walloping her and contends her demise from the hit series

was a long-planned plot point. Seven days of testimony have revealed conflicting stories that could easily have been scripted in the "Housewives" writers' room, providing a fascinating look behind the scenes of a hit prime-time series, complete with financial pressures, cast conflicts and secret meetings all on display.

Jurors have watched montages and outtakes from the show, including the 48—and counting—deaths aired since the series began in 2004. Much of the case has centered on the events in 2008, but moments after actor James Denton finished testifying, jurors heard an inadvertent spoiler about his character.

Cherry has portrayed Sheridan as a polarizing figure on set, bickering with Teri Hatcher

during the first season, not unlike the plot line at the time. He also testified that Eva Longoria and Felicity Huffman were "relieved" to learn in December 2008 that Sheridan's role as Edie Britt was being eliminated. Yet he praised Sheridan as an actress who performed so well in the show's pilot that he lobbied to make her a series regular and share the show's profits.

Jurors won't hear directly from Longoria or Huffman after a judge deemed their testimony unnecessary.

Sheridan attorney Mark Baute has noted that none of

Cherry's allegations of bad behavior were ever documented, and Cherry himself maintains he opted to kill off Edie in the fifth season primarily for creative reasons. Baute has accused Cherry and others of conspiring to make it appear they made the decision before the on-set fight, when Cherry instead cut Sheridan's role only after ABC officials cleared him of wrongdoing.

Her departure allowed the show to save much of the \$200,000 per episode Sheridan would have earned if she survived into season six. Cherry and George Perkins, an executive producer, have said "Desperate Housewives" was under pressure at the time to cut costs.

If she wins, Sheridan is seeking more than \$6 million.



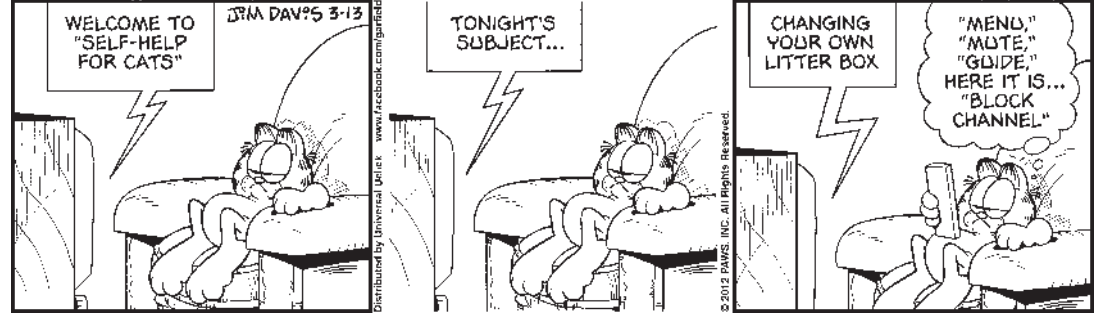
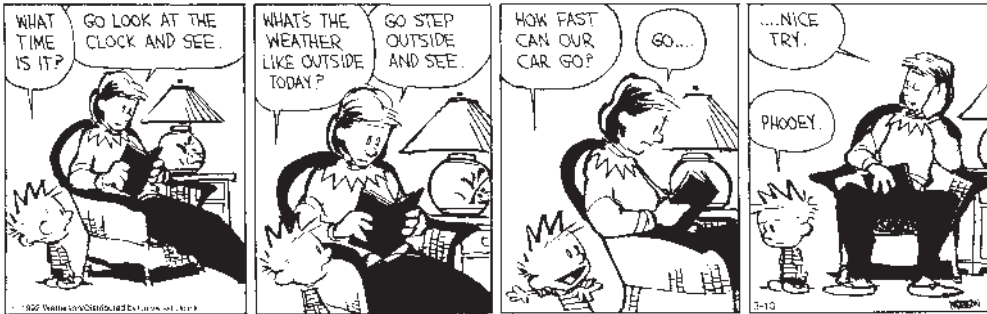
# Pastimes

## Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson

## Garfield®

By Jim Davis



## Adam@home

By Bryan Basset

## The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy



## CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

<b>ACROSS</b>	<b>37</b> Tubular pasta	<b>2</b> Historic time	<b>22</b> Manage somehow
<b>1</b> Paper quantity	<b>38</b> Fluttering sound	<b>3</b> Donkey	<b>23</b> Autumnal drink
<b>5</b> Begged	<b>40</b> Indiana politico	<b>4</b> Willful violence	<b>24</b> Smell
<b>9</b> Prepared	<b>42</b> Stashed	<b>5</b> TV's Dr. McGraw	<b>26</b> Hotel furnish-
<b>12</b> — Major	<b>43</b> Pillow filling	<b>6</b> Source of wealth	<b>27</b> Alias (Abbr.)
<b>13</b> Threw	<b>48</b> Eisen-hower	<b>7</b> Leading lady?	<b>28</b> Deserve
<b>14</b> Boston cream —	<b>49</b> Cabin make-up	<b>8</b> Madden	<b>29</b> Unit of force
<b>15</b> 1969 Peter Fonda movie	<b>50</b> Great Lake	<b>9</b> "Turn Off the Dark"	<b>31</b> "Stormy" seabirds
<b>17</b> Anger	<b>51</b> Apiece	<b>10</b> Ireland	<b>34</b> Ford or Lincoln
<b>18</b> Golf target	<b>52</b> Fat	<b>11</b> Got ready to drive	<b>35</b> Binge
<b>19</b> Helped	<b>53</b> Land-lord's due	<b>16</b> Scepter	<b>37</b> Standard
<b>21</b> Needed liniment		<b>20</b> Hockey surface	<b>38</b> Lash
<b>24</b> Formerly		<b>21</b> Some-where out there	<b>39</b> Raise, as prices
<b>25</b> Lather			<b>40</b> Advan-tage
<b>26</b> Harassed			<b>41</b> Part of a three-piece suit
<b>30</b> Spring mo.			<b>44</b> Debtor's letters
<b>31</b> Tea type			<b>45</b> Raw rock
<b>32</b> Has possibilities			<b>46</b> Victory
<b>33</b> Juniper variety			<b>47</b> Trawler need
<b>35</b> Cow palace?			
<b>36</b> Long-popular musical			

Solution time: 21 mins.

O	H	S	W	O	K	A	G	E	S
P	R	F	M	I	R	R	C	O	R
S	E	M	I	N	A	R	Y	C	A
L	O	N	S	V	E	L	I	E	
A	L	I	E	N	S	T	E	P	
B	A	B	I	P	L	O	T	T	E
A	C	E	B	R	U	N	O	T	O
E	X	P	L	O	R	E	A	U	T
W	A	S	A	B	I	S	H	E	
A	L	L	Y	S	E	M	I	N	O
H	O	U	E	E	M	U	L	A	I
D	E	E	D	D	U	G	S	T	O

Yesterday's answer 3-13

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12				13					14	
15				16					17	
			18				19	20		
21	22	23				24				
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30				31				32		
33			34					35		
		36					37			
38	39				40	41				
42				43	44				45	46
48				49					50	
51				52					53	

## STUMPED?

For answers to today's crossword, call 1-900-226-5955! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

**CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY:** Adam Clayton, 52; Dana Delany, 56; William H. Macy, 62; Neil Sedaka, 73.

**Happy Birthday:** Make changes for the right reason. Impulsive action can cause work-related problems. Sticking to your plans to ensure that your responsibilities are properly met should be your prime concern. Develop skills that will allow you to offer more to clients, employers or anyone with whom you wish to do business. Your numbers are 6, 10, 17, 21, 28, 30, 44.

**ARIES (March 21-April 19):** A last-minute change will help you out financially. Stick to the rules and regulations to avoid a run-in with authority. Don't allow someone's uncertainty to limit your chance to get ahead. Work hard and play hard to reach your goals. ★★★★★

**TAURUS (April 20-May 20):** Put more emphasis on what you do and how you do it. Perfection will allow you to continue to move in a positive direction. Networking will connect you with someone who takes an interest in something toward which you are working. ★★★

**GEMINI (May 21-June 20):** Keep busy. Idle time will lead to doing or saying the wrong thing. A moneymaking plan should be kept secret for the time being. Don't let anyone take advantage of what you've worked so hard to acquire. Protect your assets. ★★★

**CANCER (June 21-July 22):** Do what's best for you. A partnership based on equality will enable you to make an im-

portant project. Love is in the stars. Nurture any relationship that is important to you and good results will transpire. ★★★

**LEO (July 23-Aug. 22):** Plan to have some fun, and at the same time do your best to impress the people you encounter. Offering suggestions and being complimentary will lead to opportunity, as long as you are moderate when it comes to spending and indulging. ★★★★★

**VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22):** Don't leave anything to chance. Do your research and present what you have found in detail. Don't let your emotions take over or cause you to make an impulsive move that can change the outcome of something you've been working hard to achieve. ★★

**LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22):** Communication will lead to the changes you've been seeking. Adjust a partnership to meet your needs; your unusual approach will be brilliantly executed and well-received. A money matter can be resolved, and an investment can be made. ★★★★★

**SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21):** You'll be prone to overreaction in matters pertaining to work and how you earn your living. Focus on being the best you can, not criticizing others or trying to change the past. Think outside the box to find a solution. ★★★

**SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21):** Emotional deception will lead to problems with someone who can be abusive.

Don't lead anyone on or give the wrong impression if you want to avoid controversy. Focus on

## EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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the changes you can make at home to improve your personal life. ★★★

**CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19):** Back away from anyone asking for a handout. Concentrate on financial gains and ways to improve your life. Love is in the stars, and someone worthy of what you have to offer will offer as much in return. ★★★

**AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18):** Put personal issues on the back burner until you are in a better position to make sound choices. Focus on how you can earn more money or what you can offer to attract a partnership that can lead to your advancement. ★★★★★

**PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20):** Someone isn't telling the truth. Revisit recent developments in a partnership and you'll realize what needs to be addressed. A misunderstanding could impact your life if handled poorly. Don't neglect what needs to be done. ★★

**Birthday Baby:** You are practical. You plan your actions and execute them masterfully.

Eugenia's Web sites: [eugenialast.com](http://eugenialast.com) for confidential consultations, [myspace.com/eugenialast](http://myspace.com/eugenialast) for Eugenia's blog, [astroadvice.com](http://astroadvice.com) for fun

## SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku

By Dave Green

								9		
8			9	3	5					
		6		7		5				
	5		2		8		4			
	1	7					9	2		
	9		7		1		6			
		5		8		1				
			4	1	9				7	
6										

Difficulty Level ★★

3/13

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's SUDOKU Answer

4	5	1	9	3	8	6	2	7
2	6	9	1	5	7	8	4	3
3	7	8	6	4	2	1	9	5
7	4	6	3	1	9	5	8	2
9	1	3	2	8	5	7	6	4
5	8	2	7	6	4	3	1	9
8	2	5	4	7	1	9	3	6
6	9	7	8	2	3	4	5	1
1	3	4	5	9	6	2	7	8

Difficulty Level ★

7/7

## WONDERWORD

By DAVID OUELLET

**HOW TO PLAY:** All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally, even backward. Find them and CIRCLE THEIR LETTERS ONLY. DO NOT CIRCLE THE WORD. The leftover letters spell the Wonderword.

WEIGHT WATCHERS

Solution: 7 letters

M	N	M	B	E	N	T	E	R	M	G	O	A	L	E
E	O	S	A	L	I	N	E	N	N	A	L	P	A	T
E	S	T	J	E	N	N	Y	I	I	C	O	R	E	R
T	U	A	I	E	T	E	D	L	D	L	N	C	E	A
I	G	R	P	V	A	R	R	Y	K	O	N	O	C	C
N	R	T	E	L	A	N	H	I	S	E	S	O	N	K
G	E	B	H	W	E	T	N	R	P	E	E	K	A	E
A	F	U	E	C	L	H	E	O	G	S	C	W	N	R
R	L	R	V	A	N	P	S	A	S	A	N	E	E	E
T	I	N	E	L	S	U	R	E	N	D	E	I	T	D
I	S	H	I	E	C	U	L	S	R	Y	U	G	N	G
C	T	F	K	C	O	T	I	U	R	F	T	H	I	R
L	E	O	E	C	A	L	O	R	I	E	S	I	A	A
E	P	S	N	O	I	T	O	M	O	R	P	N	M	V
S	S	E	L	B	A	T	E	G	E	V	A	L	U	E

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3/13

Anytime, Articles, Burn, Calories, Cook, Core, Diet, Earn, Encourages, Ferguson, Fresh, Fruit, Goal, Healthy, Help, Hudson, Inspire, Jean, Jenny, Life, List, Lunch, Lynn, Maintenance, Meeting, Motivate, Online, Plan, Promotion, Redgrave, Rewarding, Snack, Spokesperson, Start, Success, Team, Term, Tracker, Value, Vegetables, Weekly, Weigh-In

Yesterday's Answer: Narcissus

THE COLLECTED WONDERWORD, Volume 24: The "Word" is a puzzle that is a collection of words that are hidden in a grid. The words are hidden in a grid of letters, and the puzzle is to find all the words. The words are hidden in a grid of letters, and the puzzle is to find all the words.



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Saipan Tribune

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ATTORNEYS FOR PLAINTIFF  
WELLS FARGO FINANCIAL, INC.

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT  
OF THE  
COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

WELLS FARGO FINANCIAL, INC. ) CIVIL ACTION NO. 11-0137  
Plaintiff, )  
-v- ) **NOTICE OF SALE**  
RAFAEL S. DEMAPAN )  
Defendant. )

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that, pursuant to an Order issued by the Court on January 26, 2012, in this matter, I will sell, at public auction, to the highest bidder, on the terms and conditions set forth herein below, all of the right, title, and interest of defendants Rafael S. Demapan in and to the following real property located at Saipan, Northern Mariana Islands:

**LOT NO. 045 A 75**, as more particularly described on Drawing/Cadastral Plat No. 045 A 003, the original of which was recorded on April 26, 1983 as Document No. 90-1671 at the office of the Commonwealth Recorder's, Saipan.

**Date, Time, and Place of Sale.** The sale will be held on March 26, 2012, at the hour of 4:00 p.m., at the law offices of Mailman & Kara, LLC, 2nd Floor, Tan Marikita Bldg., Beach Road at Cpl. Derence Jack Street, Garapan, Saipan, Northern Mariana Islands. The sale will be open to the general public.

**Inspection of Property.** It is the responsibility of each bidder to inspect the property prior to the sale. Failure to inspect the property or any portion thereof will not constitute ground for any claim, adjustment, or rescission by any buyer.

**Warranties and Covenants.** All property listed for sale in this Notice will be sold in its current condition, and at its current location. The sale will be held without any warranties or covenants whatsoever, whether express or implied, including but not limited to warranties of title, merchantability, and/or fitness for any purpose whatsoever, all of which warranties and covenants are hereby expressly disclaimed. Neither the undersigned nor the plaintiff may give any warranty or covenant, express or implied, with respect to the property listed for sale in this Notice. Neither the undersigned nor the plaintiff shall be liable for the quality of the property listed for sale in this Notice, or for any fault or defect in the description thereof. Buyers shall not be entitled to rescission, damages, or any other remedy on account thereof.

**Conduct of Sale.**

a. **Reserve.** The auction sale may be held with reserve. The reserve price on any property offered for sale may or may not be disclosed to bidders, in the sole discretion of the undersigned.

b. **Rights and duties of auctioneer.** Consistent with the laws, customs, and usages of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands governing auction sales, the undersigned shall have the following rights and duties in conducting the auction sale: (1) to withdraw the property listed for sale in this Notice before sale or before a bid for such property is accepted; (2) to adjourn the sale without notice at any time before any specific property is struck off, without incurring any liability whatsoever thereby; and (3) to reject, on behalf of the seller, any or all bids, for any reason.

c. **Bids.** Bids may be submitted in advance for any or all of the property listed in this Notice. The highest of such bids will automatically be considered the opening bid for the item. Advance bids may be submitted only in writing, signed by the bidder, and delivered to the law offices of Mailman & Kara, LLC, 2nd Floor, Tan Marikita Bldg., Beach Road at Cpl. Derence Jack Street, Garapan, Saipan, Northern Mariana Islands. The bidder assumes all risk of non-delivery, late delivery, or mis-delivery of bids. Any person, including the plaintiff, may bid in person at the auction sale, whether or not such person has submitted an advance bid.

d. **Disputes.** The undersigned may resubmit any property listed in this Notice if a dispute arises as to any bid thereon.

**Enforcement of Auction Sale.**

a. **Deposit.** Every successful bidder shall pay to the undersigned a deposit of ten percent (10%) of the purchase price immediately after the sale is consummated. Payment shall be in cash or by certified check. The balance must be paid to the plaintiff, in care of Mailman & Kara, LLC, within three (3) days from the date of sale, in cash or by certified check. If the balance is not so paid, plaintiff will retain the deposit as liquidated damages, and will again offer the property for sale.

b. **Memorandum of Sale.** If requested by the undersigned, every successful bidder must sign a Memorandum of Sale, immediately after the sale of any property is struck off at auction.

c. **Court Approval.** Every sale may be subject to approval by the Court. The auctioneer makes no warranties or promises with respect to court approval of the sale, including but not limited to the time in which such approval may be granted. No delay in the granting of court approval shall be ground for any claim, adjustment, or rescission by any successful bidder. The successful bidder will be promptly notified if and when court approval is sought, and if and when it is granted.

**Change of Terms and Conditions.** The undersigned and the plaintiff reserve the right to change any of the terms hereof by announcement, written or oral, made before the auction sale or at the commencement thereof, and such change or changes, by virtue of this clause, shall be binding on all bidders by constructive notice.

DATED, this 29 day of February, 2012.

/s/ RONNIE D. HODGES, Auctioneer

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■ All ads placed Friday before 12 noon will come out Saturday issue and anything placed thereafter will be published on Monday issue.

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#### Classified Ads

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# Kentucky, Syracuse, N. Carolina, MSU get top seeds

By EDDIE PELLIS  
AP NATIONAL WRITER



Kentucky, Syracuse and North Carolina tried to manufacture some chaos before the brackets came out. Like a group of 7-foot forwards roaming the middle, the members of the NCAA selection committee simply swatted all that noise away.

Even though they lost over the weekend, the Wildcats, Orange and Tar Heels turned out to be what they thought they were: top seeds—all armed with a well-timed bit of humble pie as they gear up for a run through the NCAA tournament they hope will end at the Final Four in New Orleans.

"It's done now," Kentucky coach John Calipari said of the 24-game winning streak that ended Sunday with a surprising loss to Vanderbilt in the SEC tournament final. "Now let's just go onto these three weekends. We've got a weekend in front of us. It's going to be a bear. Know what? Good. Throw anything you want to at us."

Michigan State earned the last No. 1 seed and was the only one of the four top-billed teams to win its conference tournament. The Spartans defeated Ohio State 68-64 in the Big Ten title game Sunday—a contest widely viewed as the game for the last No. 1 seed, even if selection committee chairman Jeff Hathaway wouldn't quite go there.

"As it turned out, this game put the No. 1 seed into the field," he said.

While No. 2 seeds Kansas, Duke, Missouri and Ohio State wonder whether they could have been rated higher, teams such as Drexel, Seton Hall, Mississippi State and Pac-12 regular-season champion Washington curse what might have been. Those bubble teams were left out, and all will be wondering how Iona, California and South Florida made it.

The Big East led all conferences with nine teams, including defending national champion Connecticut, a dangerous No. 9 seed, conference tournament winner Louisville and, of course, Syracuse, which cruised through most of the season with only one loss.

"I think it's going to help us a little bit," coach Jim Boheim said of the second defeat, Friday to Cincinnati in the Big East tournament. "I think players, when they're winning, they kind of excuse their mistakes. I think we finally got their attention. I think they'll be a better team going forward than they were last week."

There were 11 at-large teams from the so-called mid-major conferences,

four more than last year and the most since 2004 when 12 made it. Though the committee claims not to consider a team's conference when it picks the bracket, this was nonetheless a nod to the free-for-all this tournament can be. Last year, 4,000-student Butler finished as national runner-up for the second straight season, while VCU, of the Colonial Athletic Conference, went from one of the last teams in the newly expanded, 68-team draw, all the way to the Final Four.

Who might this year's VCU be?

It's the question being asked across the country, as those \$10 and \$20-a-pop brackets start getting inked in at spring training sites, corporate board rooms and everywhere else across America. The tournament starts Tuesday with first-round games and gets into full swing Thursday and Friday, with 64 teams in action.

"There were 112 teams with more than 20 wins," Hathaway said. "We talked a lot about parity at the high end of the field and about quality throughout the field. Bottom line, it was about who did you play, where'd you play them and how did you do?"

Some results, though, were less important than others, and apparently, losing in the conference tournament didn't cost Syracuse, Kentucky or North Carolina. Those losses could have created chaos in the bracket, but the committee had the teams more or less cemented into top spots.

"Seeding really doesn't matter too much," Tar Heels guard P.J. Hairston said after Carolina's loss to Florida State in the ACC title game Sunday, but before he knew his team would have a '1' by its name. "As long as you get in the dance, it's an equal opportunity to get to the Final Four."

Led by freshmen Anthony Davis and Michael Kidd-Gilchrist, either of whom could be one-and-done in Calipari's turnover-heavy program, the Wildcats are the No. 1 overall seed. Kentucky was placed in the South region and potentially could play six games without having to leave the Southeast.

Kentucky will open its 52nd NCAA tournament appearance in Louisville against the winner of a first-round game between Mississippi Valley State and Western Kentucky, but it gets tougher from there. A possible second-round opponent is UConn, with No. 4 Indiana possibly waiting beyond that. Before Sunday, the Hoosiers—who return to the tournament after a four-year drought—were the only team to beat Kentucky this season.

"The win streak? That's done now. The fact that we were invincible? That's



Kentucky forward Anthony Davis (23) tries to dunk the ball over Vanderbilt center Festus Ezeli (3) during the second half of an NCAA college basketball game in the championship game of the 2012 Southeastern Conference tournament at the New Orleans Arena in New Orleans, Sunday, March 11, 2012.

done now," Calipari said. "We're going to be in a dogfight. That's how you have to approach this."

Second-seeded Duke got serious consideration for moving up to a No. 1, but an 18-point loss to North Carolina in the regular-season finale and a

loss to Florida State in the ACC tournament certainly hurt. The Blue Devils are on the same side of the bracket with 11th-seeded Colorado, a team that got snubbed last year but won its way into the bracket this time by taking the Pac-12 tournament

The Pac-12 was woefully weak this year, placing only two teams and leaving Washington on the outside. This marked the first time the regular-season champion of a power conference got left out.

"Our guys are very, very disappointed, because I don't think after winning the conference outright they couldn't see any way we would not be in this tournament in their minds," Huskies coach Lorenzo Romar said.

In the West, Michigan State will begin its quest for its seventh Final Four since 1999 against No. 16 LIU. The bottom of the West draw features No. 2 Missouri, which won the Big 12 tournament but got penalized for a weak nonconference schedule.

"That hasn't changed at all over the years," Hathaway said, when asked whether the committee rewards programs that beef up their schedules.

In the East region, Syracuse opens against UNC Asheville with a possible third-round matchup against Jared Sullinger and Ohio State. Other games include No. 3 Florida State, which went 4-1 against Duke and North Carolina this year, against No. 14 St. Bonaventure, which was a surprise winner of the A-10 conference tournament and took a bubble spot away.

Maybe Drexel's?

"There must be a lot of people on the basketball committee that don't know too much about basketball," said Dragons coach Bruiser Flint, whose team went 27-6.

Others left out included Miami, Northwestern, Nevada and Oral Roberts. All had flaws, as did Iona, though the Gaels' strength of schedule appeared to carry them through.

"We tried to play teams or conferences ranked above ours, and most of those games we really had to play on the road to get those games," Iona coach Tim Cluess said. "We spent seven, eight weeks in a row on the road this year, but those were the teams we had to play to give ourselves a chance."

Hathaway said the committee gave Kansas heavy consideration as a No. 1 team. The Jayhawks, however, lost to Baylor in the Big 12 semifinals.

"We're fine with it," coach Bill Self said. "I don't think we deserve to be better than a 2. We may have been if we'd played well in (the Big 12 tournament), but we didn't. I think after everyone gets through talking about the seeds, it's about matchups anyway."

Among the most intriguing would be a Midwest regional final pitting No. 1 North Carolina and former Jayhawks coach Roy Williams against those very Jayhawks—a game that would be played in St. Louis.

## Peyton Manning spends more than 6 hours at Cardinals HQ



TEMPE, Ariz. (AP)—Peyton Manning had another marathon session during the second stop in his search for a new team.

The free-agent quarterback spent nearly 6 1/2 hours at the Arizona Cardinals' headquarters and training facility on Sunday in meetings designed to lure the superstar to the desert.

The session was even longer than the nearly six hours Manning spent at the Broncos' facility in Denver on Friday night.

Manning waved and smiled at

cheering fans as he walked from the building to coach Ken Whisenhunt's white SUV. With the coach at the wheel, Manning waved again as the SUV pulled through the security gate and past the loud supporters.

He was expected to return to his home in Florida. It was unclear whether the four-time MVP planned to meet with the Dolphins.

Titans owner Bud Adams told The Tennessean on Sunday that he has contacted Manning's agent, Tom Condon, to express his interest and ask for the quarterback to visit the Titans. The

89-year-old Adams said he will be upset if he doesn't land the former Indianapolis Colts star.

Cardinals President Michael Bidwill left immediately after Manning and Whisenhunt did. No one involved in the session spoke to reporters.

Larry Fitzgerald, one of the best receivers in the game and considered a prime reason why Manning might choose Arizona, arrived a few minutes ahead of Manning, then left after about three hours. He had a scheduled flight to Australia for a vacation later in the day.

General manager Rod Graves and

most of the members of Whisenhunt's staff, including offensive coordinator Mike Miller, offensive line and assistant head coach Russ Grimm and defensive coordinator Ray Horton also were there. Wide receiver Andre Roberts spent several hours there, as did Lisa Manning (no relation), the Cardinals' vice president for marketing.

Bidwill arrived about an hour and a half after Manning did.

"Get it done, Michael," a fan yelled. "Come on, buddy."

Among the earliest fans to arrive was 26-year-old Jarred Light, a Colts

fan who moved to the Phoenix area 1 1/2 years ago.

"I pretty much grew up around him," he said. "When I was 12 is when he came to Indy. Now I'm 26, so pretty much ever since I've been interested in football he was my favorite everything. I've seen him a couple of times in Indy from living there so many years, and now I just wanted to come out here and see if he will come to the Cardinals."

A couple of fans wore Broncos jerseys and were loudly booed when they were interviewed by television crews.



## Rose rallies to win WGC

**DORAL, Fla.** (AP)—On a day of endless drama at Doral, Justin Rose won his first World Golf Championship standing on the practice range.

Rose had to make up a three-shot deficit against Bubba Watson, and then a two-shot deficit against Keegan Bradley. Rose was steady down the stretch, even with a bogey from the bunker on the 18th hole, and closed with a 2-under 70 to win the Cadillac Championship.

Watson, as always, made it interesting. He hit a bullet of a 4-iron out of the palm trees to just inside 10 feet for a chance to force a playoff. His birdie putt missed on the low side, ending a wild day even by his standards. He closed with a 74.

If that wasn't enough, Tiger Woods muddled his Masters future when he left after 11 holes with soreness in his left Achilles tendon, wincing badly on his final shot—a 321-yard drive down the middle of the 12th fairway.

Woods said he would have it evaluated to determine the scope of the injury.

NBC Sports showed images of Woods behind the wheel in a black sedan as he drove away from Doral. It returned to golf just as Rory McIlroy, who started the final round eight shots behind, holed a bunker shot for eagle on the 12th hole.

McIlroy pulled within one shot of the lead with a birdie on the 16th hole, but he closed with a bogey and a 67 to finish alone in third.

Through it all, Rose worked his way to the top of the leaderboard with a nifty up-and-down behind the green on the par-5 10th, and he seized control of the tournament with a shot into 5 feet for birdie on the 14th.

Rose finished on 16-under 272 for his 10th victory worldwide, moving him back into the top 10 of a world ranking that remains loaded with Europeans.

It was a day that left little doubt about McIlroy's spot atop the world ranking. Just like Woods in previous years, McIlroy showed he could never be counted out with an array of splendid shots—most of them from precarious spots in the bunker—and threatened to win.

And it raised more questions about the future of Woods.

This is the same Achilles tendon he injured a year ago at the Masters while hitting a shot from under Eisenhower's tree on the 17th hole of the third round. It wound up forcing Woods to miss three months and two majors next year.

This time, he was lifting his left leg and flexing his angle, even after changing his shoes at the turn. The limp became more pronounced until he blasted his tee shot on the 12th, shook hands with Webb Simpson and rode off in a cart.

"I felt tightness in my left Achilles warming up this morn-

ing, and it continued to get progressively worse," Woods said in a statement. "After hitting my tee shot at 12, I decided it was necessary to withdraw. In the past, I may have tried to continue to play, but this time, I decided to do what I thought was necessary."

Rose was oblivious to all this.

He opened with two birdies through four holes, which was enough to catch Watson, who looked out of sorts all day.

Watson didn't hit a fairway on the front nine, and only one tee shot managed to stay inside the bunkers that frame the fairways. He was in the water twice, once in a canal on the fifth hole that not many knew were there. He shot a 39 on the front nine, which included three putts outside 8 feet to limit the damage.

It was like watching NASCAR. Watson would have looked more comfortable in his General Lee stock car he recently bought.

What was he thinking?

"I'm thinking I'm not playing very good," Watson said.

Still, he showed remarkable resiliency to give himself a chance at the end.

Watson wasn't the only player who faltered. Bradley opened with an eagle, tied for the lead with a wedge into 3 feet for birdie on the fifth, then rolled in a 12-foot birdie at No. 7 that gave him a two-shot lead.

Bradley came undone with bogeys on the par 5s, even though he was around the green with his second shot on both of them. On No. 8, his ball buried so deep in the grass behind the green—he called for a ruling to see if it had plugged—that he purposely played 20 feet away from the flag, knowing it would roll off the green. He failed to get up-and-down.

Then, he three-putted from about 6 feet on the par-5 10th, turning a birdie chance into bogey.

Bradley dropped four shots over the last four holes, including a double bogey on the 18th for a 75. He went from leading at the turn to a tie for eighth with a 41 on the back nine.

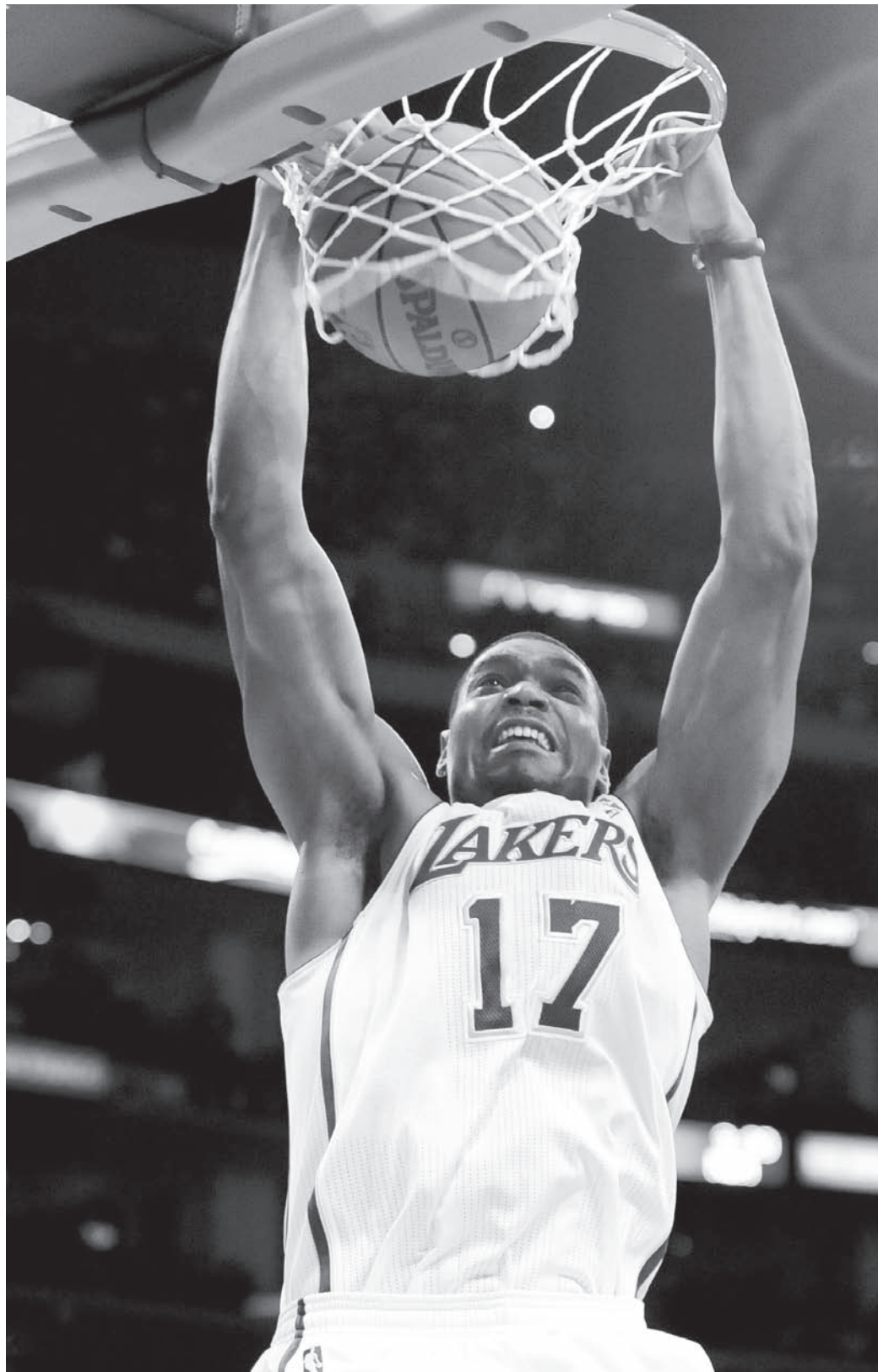
"I didn't play that bad," Bradley said. "Just some really strange putts, and then I just kind of limped in."

Rose was the last man standing. Throughout the back nine, Masters champion Charl Schwartzel, McIlroy and even Luke Donald for a brief moment all looked to be poised for a run.

Rose never came seriously close to a bogey on the back nine until his approach landed in the back bunker, and he blasted out through the green and just off the edge. He chipped to tap-in range for a bogey, dropping his lead down to one shot. Then, he headed to practice range to see if Watson could catch him.



## Lakers rally past Celtics in another thriller



Los Angeles Lakers center Andrew Bynum dunks in the first half of an NBA basketball game against the Boston Celtics, Sunday, March 11, 2012, in Los Angeles.

**LOS ANGELES** (AP)—Kobe Bryant scored 10 of his 26 points in the fourth quarter and hit a go-ahead jump shot with 41.7 seconds to play to lead the Los Angeles Lakers to a 97-94 victory over the Boston Celtics on Sunday.

Andrew Bynum had 20 points and 14 rebounds for the Lakers, who rallied from a five-point deficit in the final 2 1/2 minutes. The All-Star center hit a short hook shot over Kevin Garnett with 15.5 seconds left, and Boston couldn't get a good look at a tying 3-pointer.

Rajon Rondo had 24 points and 10 assists for the Celtics, who opened an eight-game road trip by blowing a late lead. On Boston's final possession, Ray Allen failed to get free for a 3-pointer before Rondo badly missed a tying attempt.

### 76ers 106, Knicks 94

In New York, Lou Williams scored 12 of his 28 points in a dazzling third-quarter flurry,

and Evan Turner had 24 points and 15 rebounds as Philadelphia handed New York its fifth straight loss.

Williams tossed in a long jumper to beat the halftime buzzer, then had a dozen points in the final 3:28 of the third quarter, when the 76ers seized control for their third straight victory.

Andre Iguodala had 19 points, eight assists and seven rebounds for the 76ers, who turned a competitive game into a rout to end a three-game losing streak to the Knicks.

Carmelo Anthony scored 22 points but Jeremy Lin shot just 5 of 18 for 14 points for the Knicks. Tyson Chandler had eight points and 12 rebounds after missing two games with a strained left hamstring.

### Cavaliers 118, Rockets 107

In Cleveland, Antawn Jamison scored 28 points and rookie Kyrie Irving came through again in the fourth quarter as Cleveland beat Houston.

Cleveland, which recorded a season high in points, had six players in double figures in winning its third straight game for the first time this season.

Luis Scola scored a season-high 30 points to lead Houston, which has lost six of seven.

### Bucks 105, Raptors 99

In Toronto, Ersan Ilyasova had 31 points and 12 rebounds, and Drew Gooden added 21 points as short-handed Milwaukee won its sixth straight over Toronto.

Mike Dunleavy scored 19 points, including the go-ahead 3-pointer in the fourth quarter, as the Bucks pulled within one game of the New York Knicks for the final playoff spot in the Eastern Conference.

The Bucks had just 10 active players, having lost Shaun Livingston (sprained left ankle) and Luc Richard Mbah a Moute (right knee) in Friday's win over New York. Milwaukee swingman Stephen Jackson has sidelined by a sore right hamstring since Feb. 19.

DeMar DeRozan scored 21 points and Jerryd Bayless had 16 for the Raptors.

### Magic 107, Pacers 94

In Orlando, Florida, Dwight Howard had 30 points and 13 rebounds, and J.J. Redick added 18 points and a career-high nine assists as Orlando ran past Indiana.

The Magic played without starters Hedo Turkoglu and Jason Richardson, but seemed unfazed as they built a 20-point lead in the first half and got 30 points from their reserves.

Paul George led the Pacers with 22 points, Tyler Hansbrough added 19 and Danny Granger 18.

### Grizzlies 94, Nuggets 91

In Denver, O.J. Mayo scored 22 points, including a critical 3-pointer in the closing seconds as Memphis hung on to beat Denver to sweep the three-game regular-season series for the first time in their history.

Mike Conley, who returned to play after suffering a cut above his right eye, had 13 points. Dante Cunningham added 12 points and Tony Allen 10 for the Grizzlies, who also snapped an eight-game losing streak in Denver.

Nene, Al Harrington and Corey Brewer each scored 15 for the Nuggets, who dropped to 2-2 on a season-high nine-game homestand.

### Warriors 97, Clippers 93

In Los Angeles, Dorell Wright scored 18 of his 20 points in the first half and Monta Ellis added 19 points and 11 assists as Golden State knocked the Los Angeles Clippers out of first place in the Pacific Division.

David Lee had 18 points and 10 rebounds after spending most of the game in foul trouble, helping the Warriors beat the Clippers on the road for the fourth straight time despite blowing a 21-point third-quarter lead.

Blake Griffin had 27 points and 12 rebounds for the Clippers, who missed 16 of 35 free throws. The loss, coupled with the Lakers' 97-94 victory over the Boston Celtics a few hours earlier in the first half of the Staples Center doubleheader, put the Clippers a full game behind their L.A. rivals in the race for the Pacific Division lead and homecourt advantage in the opening round of the playoffs.

### Hawks 106, Kings 99

In Sacramento, California, Josh Smith scored 19 of his 28 points in the second half for Atlanta, which defeated Sacramento for the eighth straight time.

DeMarcus Cousins fouled out late in the game but not before tying a season high with 28 and adding 12 rebounds for the Kings, who had their modest two-game win streak snapped.

Joe Johnson scored 21 points and Jeff Teague had 16 points and seven assists for the Hawks.



# Floyd Mayweather Jr: I am all-time great

## » ‘Even without fighting Manny’



MANILA, Philippines—Floyd Mayweather Jr. just can’t wait for others to extol his achievement as a fighter.

The unbeaten loudmouth has declared himself an all-time great. And that, he said, is regardless of whether his much-awaited fight with pound-for-pound rival Manny Pacquiao would push through or not.

“I’m an all-time great, with or without Pacquiao,” Mayweather told Fred Strunk of Fighthype.com on Tuesday during the New York stop of the promotional tour of his May 5 showdown with Miguel Cotto in Las Vegas.

Mayweather, the World Boxing Council welterweight champion, continued to be hounded by Pacquiao’s shadow wherever he goes.



Boxer Floyd Mayweather gestures to fans during a news conference in New York, Tuesday, Feb. 28, 2012. Mayweather will fight Miguel Cotto in Las Vegas on May 5, 2012 for Cotto’s WBA World super welterweight title.

## WRONG

From Page 28

and kept it going,” said Carey, who lost more than five minutes in the bike leg.

The 33-year-old triathlete completed the bike race in 1:54:53 (fourth in the women’s and 23rd overall), just a minute behind Slack, who also made a wrong turn in the bike race.

“At the Transition 2, I saw runners and two female pros and I tried to catch up. It was hot, there were no clouds at all. Midway in the run course, we ran in the river and I was really looking forward to that. Last year, the water was around knee high, but last Saturday it was waist high and there were some parts that my feet couldn’t touch. I swam with my running shoes on, it was

a tough run,” Carey said.

The ordeal in the 8K swim leg did not end there for Carey, as in the last few meters of the race, she had to run in the ocean during high tide.

“There was no way I could run, the water was up to my chest. I did a dolphin dive but felt the same speed, so I had to do breaststroke to make walking easier and finally I went to the finish

Most questions centered on his seeming reluctance to tangle with the eight-division world champion Filipino, now the World Boxing Organization welterweight titlist, even if both of them could earn at least \$50 million from the fight.

The megabuck bout could have pushed through in 2010 if not for Mayweather’s demand for Olympic-style blood testing.

Attempts to revive negotiations for the fight last year fizzled out due to Mayweather’s insistence on the dope-testing protocol.

There was a glimmer of hope last month, though, after Mayweather called out Pacquiao and offered the Fighter of the Decade \$40 million but without any share in the pay-per-view revenues.

Pacquiao, who said he would agree to all of Mayweather’s drug test demands, declined and countered with a 45-45 split with the remaining 10 percent. (PDI)

line,” said the 5’11” Carey.

Carey completed the run leg in 55:03 and was still happy with her result.

“It was harder this year than last, but I am still happy because I felt I did my best in the race. I am looking forward to XTERRA Saipan next week,” said Carey, who thanked her family, friends, IT&E, Brabu, Bike Pro, Triple J, Salomon, Suunto, and Zoot for their support.

## WHISPERING

From Page 28

finals. Completing Whispering Palms’ roster were Su Ah Cho, Gillian Vilagomez, Melanie Choe, Rachel Kwon, Natalie Hardt, Caitlin Tinney, and Olivia Hirsh. Mark Epley is the team’s coach.

After Aldrich’s basket gave the Terns the lead, 16-15, Whispering Palms hung in there, foiling the Lady Eagles’ repeated attempts to score. GCA had about four chances to buy a basket, but was frustrated in the closing minutes.

“We were the smallest team in the league, but we were also the best in

terms of teamwork. We pass a lot and hustle for defense. Big things come from small packages,” said Race, who had Whispering Palms’ only field goal in the first quarter.

GCA also scored one basket in the opening period off Danica Canedo’s triple and the game was even, 3-3, after the first eight minutes of play, as besides Race’s two-pointer Whispering Palms drew one charity from Aldrich.

Then in the second period, Canedo added another three and one two-pointer, while Kimiko Tenorio also lit up the scoreboard, as GCA outgunned Whispering Palms, 7-5, to take a 10-8

halftime lead. Rastguiy, who was eventually named MVP, also canned a triple in the second period, while Tan gave Whispering Palms its fifth point off a basket underneath.

In the third canto, both teams struggled offensively with the Lady Eagles making only one field goal off Tenorio’s basket and missing four free throws. Aldrich and Tan had two points apiece for Whispering Palms and the game was back to square one after the third frame, 12-12.

Both teams continued to have lackluster offense in the fourth. Whispering Palms got only one field goal in the ear-

ly minutes, courtesy of Tan, and GCA drew two points from Mulan Ta and a split free throw from Tenorio to take a slim 15-14 lead before Aldrich came to the rescue and stole the driver’s seat.

Aldrich and company earned a return trip to the finals after beating Saipan Community School in the semis, while GCA advanced following a 19-17 win over Mt. Carmel School.

**Whispering Palms 16** – Tan 6, Aldrich 5, Rastguiy 3, Race 2.

**GCA 15** – Canedo 8, Tenorio 5, Ta 2. **Scoring by quarters:** 3-3, 8-10, 12-12, 16-15.

## RACHEL

From Page 28

Tavares (7.45 seconds), Bangladesh’s Papia Rania Sarkar (8.17 seconds), Kirghizistan’s Anna Bulanova (8.19 seconds), and Nicaragua’s Marian Inally Morazan (8.29 seconds).

Eight qualifying heats were featured

in the 60m run with eight runners competing in each race and only the Top 3 advanced to the second round. Nigeria’s Gloria Asumnu and Bulgaria’s Ivet Lalova logged the fastest times among the eight heats, with their identical times of 7.19 seconds.

The World Indoors held at the Ataköy Athletics Arena in Istanbul was

Abrams’ first off-island competition this year. Northern Marianas Athletics head coach Elias Rangamar joined Abrams in the Turkey trip. The two CNMI representatives are expected to return to Saipan before the week ends.

More than 1,000 athletes competed in the World Indoors that concluded

yesterday. Winners of each event were given cash prizes. The top finishers got \$40,000 each, \$20,000 for second, and \$10,000 for third. The three other placers (fourth to sixth) took home \$9,000, \$6,000, and \$4,000. For relays, the Top 3 finishers received \$40,000, \$20,000, and \$10,000, while the next three got \$8,000, \$6,000, and \$4,000.

## SUNRISERS

From Page 28

SCS got off to a strong start behind their four triples and Bon Tamayo’s 10 points, while only Mel Manibusan scored more than one field goal for the Sunrisers in the opening canto.

The Sunrisers then played catch up in the ensuing plays and then took a 68-60 lead in the first 5:20 of the fourth quarter when it started the final canto with a big 14-0 run. Manibusan anchored the rally, scoring six straight points in the run, while Josh Sablan added four and Jawn Joyner and Pete Lizama chipped in two apiece.

Tamayo ended SCS’ long drought with a banked shot with under five minutes left on the clock, but that was not enough to spark his team’s comeback. Jun Pantaleon converted back-

to-back triples in SCS’ last ditch effort to recover, 76-78, but three straight points from Manibusan, followed by Lizama’s layup sealed the win for the Sunrisers. Jeff Quitigua’s jumper at the buzzer pegged the final score.

Manibusan top-scored for the Sunrisers with 23, while Lizama finished with 16. Three-point shooter Preston Basa and Joshn Sablan contributed 13 apiece with the latter draining back-to-back triples at the end of the second period to force a deadlock at halftime, 36-all.

Tamayo paced SCS with 20, including eight in the third period to give his team a 60-54 lead, going into the fourth frame. He added four more in the final canto and lacked support from his teammates, who were already tired from playing too many minutes. SCS had only seven players available for the game.

### Mobil 89, Hite Beer 83

In the first game, Mobil pulled away in the second period and halted Hite Beer’s rally in the fourth en route to the six-point win.

Ahead by only three after the first canto, 21-18, Mobil outscored Hite Beer, 32-20, for a commanding 58-38 halftime lead. Ernie Moises and Jun Estolas conspired in the second-quarter breakaway, firing 11 and nine points, respectively.

Mobil kept the double-digit advantage in the third, as Estolas and company continued to find holes on Hite Beer’s defense. Mobil’s 17 point lead at the end of the third, 76-59, was enough to compensate their 13-point output in the fourth, 11 markers less than Hite Beer’s production.

Estolas finished with 26 for Mobil, while Hite’s Alex Lauron led all scorers

with his 26. Mobil improved to a 2-1 record, while Hite fell to a 2-4 card.

### First Game

**Mobil 89** – Estolas 26, Moises 16, Ruluked 14, Fernando 14, Abuan 8, Reyes 4, Dayrit 2, Mallari 2.

**Hite Beer/Blue Haus 83** – Lauron 28, Tenorio 12, Cabrera 12, Palacios 8, Z. Babauta 6, R. Babauta 5, Diaz 3, Park 2, Lansang 2.

**Scoring by quarters:** 21-18, 53-38, 76-59, 89-83.

### Second Game

**Sunrisers/Island Apparel 85** – Manibusan 23, Lizama 16, Basa 13, Jos. Sabaln 13, Joyner 11, Quitugua 9.

**SCS 76** – Tamayo 20, Ritual 16, Manalo 15, Pantaleon 14, Galarse 9.

**Scoring by quarters:** 9-24, 37-37, 54-60, 85-76.

## TRIBUNE SPORTS SCORES

### NBA STANDINGS

#### EASTERN CONFERENCE

##### Atlantic Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Philadelphia	25	17	.595	—
Boston	21	19	.525	3
New York	18	23	.439	6 1/2
New Jersey	14	28	.333	11
Toronto	13	28	.317	11 1/2

##### Southeast Division

Miami	31	9	.775	—
Orlando	27	15	.643	5
Atlanta	24	17	.585	7 1/2
Washington	9	30	.231	21 1/2
Charlotte	5	34	.128	25 1/2

##### Central Division

Chicago	34	9	.791	—
Indiana	23	16	.590	9
Milwaukee	17	24	.415	16
Cleveland	16	23	.410	16
Detroit	15	26	.366	18

#### WESTERN CONFERENCE

##### Southwest Division

San Antonio	26	13	.667	—
Memphis	24	16	.600	2 1/2
Dallas	23	20	.535	5
Houston	22	20	.524	5 1/2
New Orleans	10	31	.244	17

##### Northwest Division

Oklahoma City	32	9	.780	—
Denver	23	19	.548	9 1/2
Minnesota	21	21	.500	11 1/2
Portland	20	21	.488	12
Utah	19	21	.475	12 1/2

##### Pacific Division

L.A. Lakers	25	16	.610	—
L.A. Clippers	23	16	.590	1
Phoenix	19	21	.475	5 1/2
Golden State	17	21	.447	6 1/2
Sacramento	14	27	.341	11

#### Yesterday’s Games

Philadelphia 106, New York 94  
L.A. Lakers 97, Boston 94  
Cleveland 118, Houston 107  
Milwaukee 105, Toronto 99  
Orlando 107, Indiana 94  
Memphis 94, Denver 91  
Atlanta 106, Sacramento 99  
Golden State 97, L.A. Clippers 93

## CADILLAC CHAMPIONSHIP SCORES

### FINAL ROUND

Justin Rose (550), \$1,400,000	69-64-69-70-272
Bubba Watson (315), \$845,000	70-62-67-74-273
Rory McIlroy (200), \$516,000	73-69-65-67-274
Peter Hanson, \$362,500	70-65-69-71-275
Charl Schwartzel (128), \$362,500	68-69-70-68-275
Luke Donald (100), \$260,000	70-68-69-69-276
John Senden (100), \$260,000	76-67-68-65-276
Keegan Bradley (81), \$165,000	69-67-66-75-277
Matt Kuchar (81), \$165,000	72-67-66-72-277
Steve Stricker (81), \$165,000	69-70-69-69-277
Bo Van Pelt (81), \$165,000	73-65-70-69-277
Aaron Baddeley (69), \$120,000	69-74-68-67-278
Graeme McDowell (61), \$101,000	75-67-67-70-279
Francesco Molinari, \$101,000	75-68-71-65-279
Adam Scott (61), \$101,000	66-68-74-71-279
Johnson Wagner (61), \$101,000	70-69-67-73-279
Charles Howell III (53), \$92,000	70-67-71-72-280
Zach Johnson (53), \$92,000	70-68-67-75-280
Nick Watney (53), \$92,000	71-73-69-67-280
Greg Chalmers (50), \$85,000	71-70-68-72-281
Jason Day (50), \$85,000	73-67-70-71-281
Robert Karlsson (50), \$85,000	75-67-67-70-281
Martin Kaymer, \$85,000	73-64-70-74-281
Thomas Bjorn, \$76,000	68-68-75-71-282
Marcus Fraser, \$76,000	76-68-69-69-282
Martin Laird (45), \$76,000	72-73-66-71-282
Hunter Mahan (45), \$76,000	71-72-66-73-282
Robert Rock, \$76,000	75-70-68-69-282
Jason Dufner (40), \$67,500	66-72-73-72-283
Bill Haas (40), \$67,500	74-70-70-69-283
Anders Hansen, \$67,500	70-72-69-72-283
Garth Mulroy (40), \$67,500	73-71-69-70-283
Lee Westwood (40), \$67,500	76-67-68-72-283
Gary Woodland (40), \$67,500	71-70-70-72-283
Jonathan Byrd (33), \$60,500	72-70-70-72-284
K.J. Choi (33), \$60,500	74-67-70-73-284
Nicolas Colsearts, \$60,500	73-70-70-71-284
Branden Grace, \$60,500	78-72-64-70-284
Dustin Johnson (33), \$60,500	75-68-73-68-284
Juic Pagunsan, \$60,500	69-71-72-72-284
Chez Reavie (33), \$60,500	78-68-67-71-284
Webb Simpson (33), \$60,500	75-66-66-77-284
Darren Clarke, \$55,500	74-74-68-69-285
Phil Mickelson (28), \$55,500	72-71-71-71-285
Rickie Fowler (24), \$52,000	74-70-72-70-286
Retief Goosen (24), \$52,000	74-71-71-70-286
Miguel A. Jimenez, \$52,000	69-71-73-73-286
Brandt Snedeker (24), \$52,000	75-69-70-72-286
Mark Wilson (24), \$52,000	72-70-72-72-286
Hennie Otto, \$49,000	73-66-71-77-287
Paul Casey (19), \$46,875	76-71-68-73-288
Ben Crane (19), \$46,875	73-71-73-71-288
K.T. Kim, \$46,875	74-72-70-72-288
Kyle Stanley (19), \$46,875	69-69-76-74-288
Gonzalo Fdez-Castano, \$45,250	74-70-73-72-289
Geoff Ogilvy (16), \$45,250	73-73-70-73-289
Jbe' Kruger, \$44,250	72-71-73-74-290
Alvaro Quiros, \$44,250	69-74-71-76-290
Y.E. Yang (12), \$43,500	72-67-76-76-291
Sergio Garcia (9), \$42,000	75-74-68-76-293
Paul Lawrie, \$42,000	70-74-72-77-293
Louis Oosthuizen (9), \$42,000	77-70-74-72-293
Ian Poulter (9), \$42,000	76-77-71-69-293
Tadahiro Takayama, \$42,000	74-73-75-71-293
Rafael Cabrera Bello, \$40,500	75-70-75-74-294
Pablo Larrazabal, \$39,750	76-73-71-75-295
Vijay Singh (5), \$39,750	75-73-72-75-295
Fredrik Jacobson (3), \$39,000	72-76-71-77-296
Alexander Noren, \$38,500	74-75-72-76-297
Tetsuji Hiratsuka, \$38,000	78-73-70-77-298
Sang-Moon Bae (1), \$37,750	79-76-73-71-299
Simon Dyson, \$37,500	74-72-73-81-300
Tiger Woods	72-67-68-WD

BY THE ASSOCIATED PRESS



# 2012 Tan Holdings Badminton Competition Opening

PHOTOS By ROSELYN B. MONROYO



Tan Holdings corporate consultant Dave Sablan, fifth from left, turns over Tan Siu Lin Foundation's donation for the 2012 Tan Holdings Badminton Competition during the opening ceremony late last month at the TSL Sports Complex. Also in the photo is foundation manager Ed Arriola, left, and the representatives of various badminton clubs.



Tan Holdings corporate consultant Dave Sablan makes the ceremonial serve to kick off the tournament.



Taga's Rodwealth Espana, left, recites the players pledge before starting the competition. Joining him is tournament director Macoi Aguda.



Players of newcomer AON Badminton Club pose for a group photo.



Players of the Berks Blazers pose for a group photo.



Shirley's Badminton Club players participate in the parade of teams.



Golden Racquet Badminton Club players enter the court.



Saipan Badminton Club players listen to the remarks of Northern Marianas Badminton Association president Jerry Tan.



The Taga Badminton Club players.

**SPORTS TSL Activity Schedule for March 13, 2012**

8:00 AM to 12:00 PM: Morning practices  
6:30 PM to 9:30 PM: Evening practices

**2012 Tan Holdings Intercompany Basketball League**

7:00 PM: Saipan Grand Hotel vs. Fiesta Resort & Spa  
9:00 PM: D&Q/CTSI vs. Shirley's Coffee Shop

There are no scheduled games.



Lakers rally  
past Celtics in  
another thriller

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# Saipan Tribune Sports

Kentucky, Syracuse,  
N. Carolina, MSU  
get top seeds

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28 TUESDAY, MARCH 13, 2012

SAIPAN TRIBUNE

## Wrong turn costs Mieko XTERRA Guam

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO  
roselyn\_monroyo@saipantribune.com  
REPORTER

Saipan pro Mieko Carey missed her third XTERRA Guam crown after making a wrong turn in the 31K bike leg of last Saturday's race.

Carey, who completed the championship race in 3:14:22, finished fourth in the women's pro division behind champion Renata Bucher of Switzerland (2:47:25), Austria's Carina Wasle (3:02:26), and United Kingdom's Jacqui Slack (3:07:10). The Saipan bet ended up at fourth despite finishing second in the 1.5K swim (24:26) and leading Wasle and Bucher by about a minute. Slack was the first woman out of the water (21:32).

"The swim was great, not much current and waves. It was nice to race in Guam again and have my first big triathlon event of the year after several months of training," said Carey.

What started as a great race turned into a not so good when Carey made a wrong turn after biking for about 30 minutes.

"I don't know how I got lost," said Carey, who was in Guam a few days before the race and took part in a pre-ride of the course with local riders and got lost, too. "I was following the XTERRA tape, but suddenly I came out at the place I had been before. I later found out I should turned right, instead of straight ahead," the 2011 XTERRA Guam champion said.

"I saw two riders from the other side and then followed them to finish the course. After the wrong turn, I had no rest

See **WRONG** on **Page 26**

Mieko Carey crosses the finish line of last Saturday's 2012 XTERRA Guam Championship.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO



## Rachel passes Yvette's time in World Indoor

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO  
roselyn\_monroyo@saipantribune.com  
REPORTER



CNMI sprinter Rachel Abrams completed her 60m race in the 13th IAAF World Indoor Championships in Turkey last Saturday (Sunday on Saipan) in 8.31 seconds.

The time was faster than the 8.68 seconds Yvette Bennett posted in the same event in Doha, Qatar in 2010. Abrams was on Heat 1 of the qualifying race, along with seven others.

Italy's Audrey Alloah recorded the fastest time in the heat at 7.33 seconds to advance to the next round with two others—Jamaica's Aleen Bailey (7.34 seconds) and Great Britain's Asha Philip (7.37 seconds). Also on the heat, but failed to qualify were Portugal's Sonia

See **RACHEL** on **Page 26**



ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Rachel Abram is seen here during the awards ceremony for the NMASA Banquet last month, represented the CNMI in the 13th IAAF World Indoor Championships in Istanbul, Turkey.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Players of Whispering Palms pose with their championship trophy after defeating Grace Christian Academy in the finals of the COPSSA junior varsity caging last Friday at the Gillette Multipurpose Gymnasium.

## Whispering Palms wins JV title

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO  
roselyn\_monroyo@saipantribune.com  
REPORTER



No more bridesmaid finish for Whispering Palms this time.

After placing second to Saipan International School last season,

19-24, Whispering Palms came out on top of the girls junior varsity division 2011-2012 Coalition of Private Schools Sports Association Basketball League after slipping past Grace Christian Academy in the finals, 16-15, last Friday at the Gillette Multipurpose Gymnasium.

Jennifer Tan, Maile Aldrich, Negahr Rastguir, and Gabrielle Race provided the needed offense for Whispering Palms and the rest of the team played tough defense in the last three minutes of the fourth quarter to eke out a close win in the winner-take-all

See **WHISPERING** on **Page 26**

## Sunrisers extend streak in DLX/Miller Lite league

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO  
roselyn\_monroyo@saipantribune.com  
REPORTER



The Sunrisers kept their unbeaten record after yet another win against SCS

Heavy Equipment, 85-76, during the second game in the 2nd Domino Lux International Fraternity/Miller Lite Basketball Invitational Friendship League last Saturday night at the Gualo Rai Basketball Court.

The Sunrisers improved to a 6-0 record—a perfect mark that was put in danger early in the game when SCS took a 24-9 advantage in the first period.

See **SUNRISERS** on **Page 26**

The Sunrisers/Island Apparel's Mel Manibusan goes up for a shot against SCS Heavy Equipment Rental's Rocyl Ritual during the fourth quarter of their game in the DLX/Miller Lite caging last Saturday at the Gualo Rai Basketball Court.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO

